

The Mediating Role of Organizational Culture in the Relationship between Work Motivation, Professional Responsibility, and Teacher Performance

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Abstract

This study examines the mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between work motivation, professional responsibility, and teacher performance among 165 public junior high school teachers in Kota Kisaran, Indonesia. Using path analysis, the research tested direct and indirect effects within a structural model based on organizational behavior theory. Results revealed that organizational culture significantly mediates the influence of both work motivation and professional responsibility on teacher performance, transmitting 42.4% of each variable's total effect. While all three predictors demonstrated significant direct effects on performance, organizational culture emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.561$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 47.4% of performance variance. The simultaneous model achieved robust explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.484$, $F = 50.295$, $p < 0.001$) with perfect model fit ($Q = 1.00$). These findings demonstrate that teacher performance results from synergistic interactions between individual characteristics and organizational contexts rather than isolated factors. The study contributes to educational management literature by empirically validating culture as a critical transmission mechanism linking motivation and accountability to professional outcomes. Implications suggest that school leaders should prioritize integrated interventions addressing motivation, responsibility, and culture simultaneously rather than fragmented approaches to enhance teaching quality effectively.

Introduction

Education serves as a strategic foundation for enhancing human resource quality, with teachers playing a central role in determining the success of educational processes in schools. Teacher performance represents a primary indicator for evaluating the effectiveness of educational implementation, as teachers engage in direct interaction with students during the learning process (Alfiyanto et al., 2021; Harahap et al., 2022; Kuleto et al., 2021; Li, 2024; Rostini et al., 2022; Y. Wang & Liu, 2020). The success of education in schools is fundamentally determined by teacher performance as the main executor of learning, where teachers strategically translate educational objectives into effective instructional practices. Consequently, the quality of education heavily depends on the quality of teacher performance, necessitating continuous efforts to strengthen and improve teacher professionalism (Annan, 2020; Darling-Hammond, 2020; Fairman et al., 2022; Isa et al., 2024). This interdependent relationship between education and teacher performance underscores the importance of examining the factors that contribute to optimal teacher functioning in educational settings.

Conceptually, performance is defined as the work results achieved by an individual in terms of both quality and quantity when carrying out assigned responsibilities (Duggan et al., 2020; Hernaus et al., 2021; Rambulangi et al., 2024; Wijayati et al., 2022). In the educational context, teacher performance encompasses not only student learning outcomes but also professional

work processes reflecting competence, attitudes, and work behaviors. According to Cai et al (2020), Duggan et al (2020), and Zhenjing et al (2022), individual performance is influenced by ability, motivation, and opportunity or work environment. For teachers, ability relates to pedagogical and professional competencies, while motivation and work environment concern psychological and organizational factors supporting optimal task execution. Furthermore, Hamka (2023), Ramirez-Montoya et al (2021), Sariakin et al (2025), and Yuliana et al (2025) explain that teacher performance reflects the level of success in fulfilling roles as educators, instructors, mentors, and evaluators, characterized by discipline, responsibility, creativity, and commitment to quality improvement.

Work motivation represents a critical factor influencing teacher performance, serving as internal and external drives that determine the extent to which individuals are willing to exert effort in their professional duties. Drawing from Self-Determination Theory, Ryan & Deci (2000) identify three basic psychological needs that drive intrinsic motivation: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the teaching profession, these needs manifest as the desire for pedagogical decision-making freedom, mastery of subject matter and instructional methods, and positive relationships with students and colleagues. Several previous studies emphasize that teachers experiencing autonomy in pedagogical decisions, feeling competent in their expertise, and maintaining supportive professional relationships demonstrate higher intrinsic motivation, which subsequently translates into superior performance (Merdiaty & Sulistiasih, 2024; Reeve & Cheon, 2021; Salmani Ghasemzadegan et al., 2025; X. Wang et al., 2023). Additionally, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, as contextualized by recent educational research, distinguishes between motivator factors (achievement, recognition, responsibility, growth opportunities) and hygiene factors (organizational policies, supervision, working conditions), with motivators showing more significant impact on teacher performance (Shinde, 2025).

Professional responsibility constitutes another essential dimension affecting teacher performance, reflecting teachers' awareness of their roles and obligations within the educational organization. Brick et al (2021) and Rebecchi et al (2024) develop a comprehensive framework of teacher professional responsibility encompassing four dimensions: responsibility for student learning, responsibility for student motivation, responsibility for student achievement, and responsibility for protecting students from harm. This multidimensional construct involves cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects manifested in concrete classroom actions. Complementing this perspective, (Cai et al., 2022; Martin & Borup, 2022) identifies three accountability dimensions relevant to public service professionals: vertical accountability to superiors and systems, horizontal accountability to colleagues and the profession, and diagonal accountability to society and stakeholders. For teachers, these dimensions translate into compliance with educational policies, collaborative professional engagement, and responsiveness to student and community needs (Feng et al., 2024; Miller et al., 2021).

Organizational culture emerges as a pivotal contextual factor shaping teacher performance, representing the shared values, norms, and beliefs that guide member behavior within educational institutions. Byrne et al (2021) conceptualizes organizational culture through three levels: visible artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. In school contexts, artifacts include physical classroom arrangements and ceremonial practices; espoused values reflect institutional vision and mission statements; while basic assumptions encompass deep-seated beliefs about learning nature and educational purposes. Demissie & Egziabher (2022) classify organizational cultures into four typologies: clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy, with clan culture emphasizing collaboration and human development showing particular promise for enhancing teacher performance. Schipper et al (2020) identify four critical

dimensions of school culture: academic emphasis, collective efficacy, faculty trust, and teacher collaboration, which collectively create conducive or counterproductive climates for professional performance.

The mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between individual factors and performance has gained increasing scholarly attention in educational research. According to organizational behavior theory, organizational culture functions as a mechanism through which individual motivations and responsibilities translate into actual work outcomes (Robbins & Judge, 2022). Çoğaltay & Boz (2023), in their meta-analysis of 65 studies, found that schools with positive cultures demonstrate strong correlations ($r = 0.72$) with superior teacher performance, suggesting that culture serves as a pathway through which individual characteristics manifest in professional behavior. Collie & Mansfield (2022), in a three-year longitudinal study of 45 schools, demonstrated that positive changes in school culture were followed by significant improvements in teacher motivation, instructional quality, and student learning outcomes. These findings support the theoretical proposition that organizational culture mediates the influence of work motivation and professional responsibility on teacher performance, rather than operating merely as a contextual background factor.

Despite extensive research on teacher performance determinants, significant gaps remain in understanding the integrated relationships among work motivation, professional responsibility, and organizational culture, particularly in specific regional contexts. Previous studies have predominantly examined these variables in isolation or in urban educational settings, leaving rural and semi-urban areas underrepresented in the literature (Hernández-Torrano, 2018). Furthermore, while work motivation and organizational culture have received considerable attention, professional responsibility has often been treated as a moderating variable rather than an independent predictor in educational research (Watt et al., 2021). The simultaneous examination of all three variables within a single comprehensive model remains limited, especially at the junior high school level in regional Indonesian contexts. This study addresses these gaps by empirically testing the direct and indirect effects of work motivation and professional responsibility on teacher performance, with organizational culture serving as a mediator, among public junior high school teachers. Based on the theoretical framework of Robbins & Judge (2022) regarding individual performance as a function of motivation, commitment, and organizational environment, this research aims to provide comprehensive, contextualized insights into teacher performance enhancement in public junior high schools

Methods

This study employed a quantitative explanatory design using path analysis to examine the mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between work motivation, professional responsibility, and teacher performance. The study was conducted in seven public junior high schools in Kota Kisaran, Asahan Regency, Indonesia. The population consisted of 290 teachers, from which 165 teachers were selected using proportional stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation from each school.

The study involved four variables: work motivation (X_1), professional responsibility (X_2), organizational culture (X_3), and teacher performance (X_4). Work motivation and professional responsibility were treated as exogenous variables, organizational culture was positioned as the mediating variable, and teacher performance was treated as the endogenous variable. Data were collected using structured questionnaires consisting of 30 items for each variable. Work motivation was measured through indicators of achievement needs, enthusiasm, recognition, self-development, and job satisfaction. Professional responsibility was measured through compliance, timeliness, consistency, earnestness, and willingness to carry out additional duties.

Organizational culture was measured through shared values, cooperation, leadership, commitment, and school climate. Teacher performance was measured through lesson planning, learning implementation, evaluation, discipline, and professionalism. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. Prior to the main data collection, the instruments were pilot-tested on 30 teachers outside the main sample to assess validity and reliability. The instruments were considered reliable because Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.60.

Data analysis was conducted in several stages. First, descriptive statistics were used to present the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, variance, range, minimum, and maximum scores for each variable. Frequency distribution was also used to describe the tendency level of teacher performance. Second, assumption testing was performed before conducting path analysis, including the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality, deviation from linearity for linearity, Bartlett's test for homogeneity, and tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for multicollinearity. Third, path analysis was conducted through two structural sub-models: the first examined the effects of work motivation and professional responsibility on organizational culture, while the second examined the effects of work motivation, professional responsibility, and organizational culture on teacher performance. The structural models were specified as follows:

$$X_3 = \rho_{31}X_1 + \rho_{32}X_2 + \varepsilon_1$$

$$X_4 = \rho_{41}X_1 + \rho_{42}X_2 + \rho_{43}X_3 + \varepsilon_2$$

Hypothesis testing was conducted using t-tests to examine individual path coefficients and F-tests to assess the simultaneous effect of the predictors. Mediation effects were calculated by multiplying the relevant path coefficients and were further examined using the Sobel test. The total, direct, and indirect effects were then decomposed to determine the proportion of mediation. Model fit was assessed using the Q coefficient and chi-square value to evaluate whether the proposed model adequately represented the empirical data. All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of 0.05.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

This study examined four research variables: work motivation (X_1), professional responsibility (X_2), organizational culture (X_3), and teacher performance (X_4). Data were collected from 165 teachers across seven public junior high schools in Kota Kisaran, Asahan Regency, Indonesia. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to characterize the distribution and tendency categories of each variable.

Table 1. Summary of Descriptive Statistics

Statistic	Work Motivation (X_1)	Professional Responsibility (X_2)	Organizational Culture (X_3)	Teacher Performance (X_4)
N (Valid)	165	165	165	165
Mean	121.29	119.42	119.81	117.86
Median	122.00	121.00	122.00	120.00
Mode	119	121	125	123
Std. Deviation	9.555	13.262	13.283	14.574
Variance	91.305	175.892	176.446	212.413

Range	56	63	65	62
Minimum	89	83	83	84
Maximum	145	146	148	146

The empirical mean scores for all variables exceeded the ideal mean of 90 (calculated as $\frac{1}{2} \times$ [minimum ideal score 30 + maximum ideal score 150]), indicating generally favorable conditions across all measured constructs. Teacher performance demonstrated the highest variability (SD = 14.574), suggesting diverse performance levels among teachers, while work motivation showed the most consistent responses (SD = 9.555).

Analysis of teacher performance revealed a mean score of 117.86, with scores ranging from 84 to 146. The frequency distribution across eight class intervals showed that the majority of teachers (66.1%) demonstrated moderate performance levels, while 17.5% exhibited high performance and 16.4% showed low performance. This distribution indicates that while most teachers meet basic performance standards, there remains substantial room for improvement to achieve optimal performance levels.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Teacher Performance Scores

Class	Interval	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	84 – 91	14	8.48%	8.48%
2	92 – 99	11	6.67%	15.15%
3	100 – 107	17	10.30%	25.45%
4	108 – 115	29	17.58%	43.03%
5	116 – 123	35	21.21%	64.24%
6	124 – 131	33	20.00%	84.24%
7	132 – 139	20	12.12%	96.36%
8	140 – 148	6	3.64%	100.00%

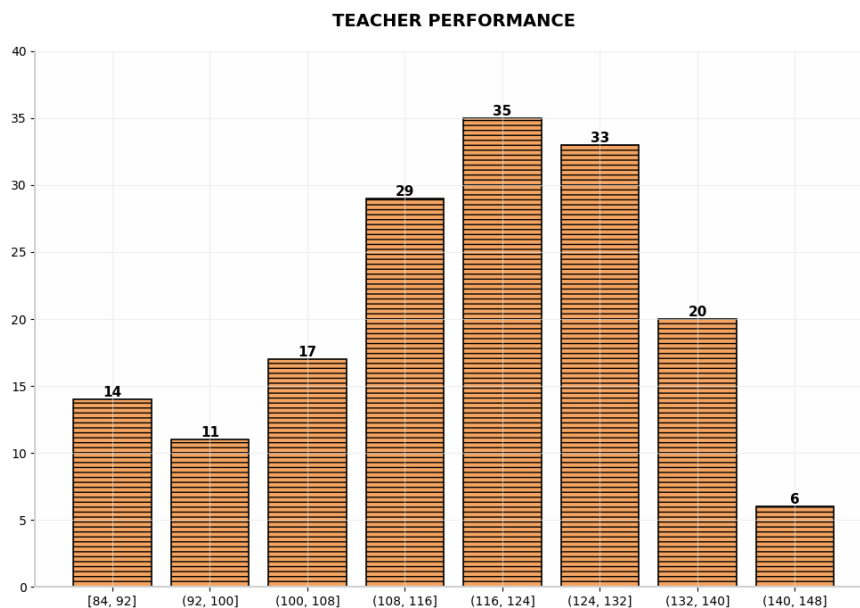


Figure 1. Histogram of Teacher Performance Distribution

The histogram reveals a approximately normal distribution with slight negative skewness, indicating that teacher performance tends toward moderate to high levels. The concentration of scores in the middle-to-upper ranges (classes 4-6) suggests that the majority of teachers

maintain acceptable professional standards while a smaller proportion achieves exceptional performance.

Work motivation exhibited the highest mean score (121.29) among all variables, with 68.5% of teachers demonstrating moderate motivation levels, 14.5% showing high motivation, and 17.0% displaying low motivation. The relatively high mean score suggests that teachers in Kota Kisaran generally possess adequate motivational drive, though the 17% with low motivation represents a significant concern requiring intervention.

Professional responsibility showed a mean score of 119.42, with 66.1% of teachers in the moderate category, 15.7% in the high category, and 18.2% in the low category. The distribution pattern closely mirrors that of work motivation, suggesting that these two individual factors may be interrelated in influencing teacher behavior.

Organizational culture demonstrated a mean score of 119.81, with 61.2% of teachers perceiving moderate organizational culture, 18.8% perceiving strong culture, and 20.0% perceiving weak culture. Notably, organizational culture showed the highest percentage of teachers in the low category (20%) compared to other variables, indicating potential weaknesses in school cultural development that may impede performance optimization.

Assumption Testing for Path Analysis

Prior to conducting path analysis, four critical assumptions were tested: normality, linearity, homogeneity, and multicollinearity. All assumption tests confirmed the appropriateness of parametric statistical procedures for the research data. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied to assess the normality of data distribution across all variable relationships. Results indicated that all significance values exceeded the alpha level of 0.05, confirming normal distribution for all research variables.

Table 3. Summary of Normality Testing

Variable Relationship	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. (0.05)	Decision
$X_1 \rightarrow X_3$	0.518	0.05	Normal
$X_2 \rightarrow X_3$	0.281	0.05	Normal
$X_1 \rightarrow X_4$	0.377	0.05	Normal
$X_2 \rightarrow X_4$	0.671	0.05	Normal
$X_3 \rightarrow X_4$	0.297	0.05	Normal

The linearity test examined whether relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables followed linear patterns. All deviation from linearity values exceeded 0.05, confirming linear relationships suitable for regression analysis.

Table 4. Summary of Linearity Testing

Variable Relationship	Sig. Deviation from Linearity	Sig. (0.05)	Decision
$X_1 \rightarrow X_3$	0.142	0.05	Linear
$X_2 \rightarrow X_3$	0.139	0.05	Linear
$X_1 \rightarrow X_4$	0.784	0.05	Linear
$X_2 \rightarrow X_4$	0.417	0.05	Linear
$X_3 \rightarrow X_4$	0.707	0.05	Linear

Bartlett's test was employed to assess variance homogeneity across groups. All significance values exceeded 0.05, confirming that sample characteristics adequately represented population parameters.

Table 5. Summary of Homogeneity Testing

Variable Relationship	Sig.	Sig. (0.05)	Decision
$X_1 \rightarrow X_3$	0.744	0.05	Homogeneous
$X_2 \rightarrow X_3$	0.906	0.05	Homogeneous
$X_1 \rightarrow X_4$	0.396	0.05	Homogeneous
$X_2 \rightarrow X_4$	0.202	0.05	Homogeneous
$X_3 \rightarrow X_4$	0.242	0.05	Homogeneous

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values were examined to detect multicollinearity among exogenous variables. All tolerance values exceeded 0.10 and all VIF values were below 10.00, confirming the absence of multicollinearity.

Table 6. Summary of Multicollinearity Testing

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Interpretation
Work Motivation	0.954	1.049	No multicollinearity
Professional Responsibility	0.904	1.107	No multicollinearity
Organizational Culture	0.882	1.134	No multicollinearity

Path Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Path analysis was conducted to examine both direct and indirect effects within the proposed theoretical model. The analysis proceeded through two structural sub-models: (1) organizational culture as a function of work motivation and professional responsibility, and (2) teacher performance as a function of all three predictors.

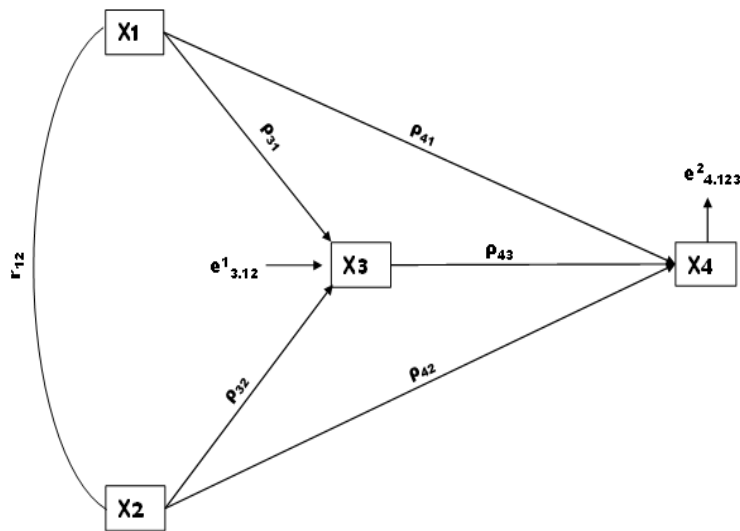


Figure 2. Path Diagram of Research Variables

Note: X_1 = Work Motivation; X_2 = Professional Responsibility; X_3 = Organizational Culture; X_4 = Teacher Performance; e_1, e_2 = Error Terms

The first sub-model examined the influence of work motivation and professional responsibility on organizational culture. The structural equation was specified as:

$$X_3 = \rho_{31}X_1 + \rho_{32}X_2 + \varepsilon_1$$

Table 7. Path Coefficients for Sub-Structural Model 1

Path	Coefficient	t-value	Sig.	Interpretation
$\rho_{31} (X_1 \rightarrow X_3)$	0.194	2.623	0.010	Significant
$\rho_{32} (X_2 \rightarrow X_3)$	0.298	4.030	0.000	Significant

The model yielded an adjusted R^2 of 0.107, indicating that work motivation and professional responsibility collectively explained 10.7% of the variance in organizational culture. Both predictors demonstrated significant positive effects, with professional responsibility ($\beta = 0.298$) showing stronger influence than work motivation ($\beta = 0.194$). The residual variance ($e^2 = 0.882$) suggests that substantial unexplained factors influence organizational culture beyond the measured individual characteristics.

The second sub-model examined the simultaneous influence of work motivation, professional responsibility, and organizational culture on teacher performance. The structural equation was specified as:

$$X_4 = \rho_{41}X_1 + \rho_{42}X_2 + \rho_{43}X_3 + \varepsilon_2$$

Table 8. Path Coefficients for Sub-Structural Model 2

Path	Coefficient	t-value	Sig.	Interpretation
$\rho_{41} (X_1 \rightarrow X_4)$	0.148	2.546	0.012	Significant
$\rho_{42} (X_2 \rightarrow X_4)$	0.227	3.815	0.000	Significant
$\rho_{43} (X_3 \rightarrow X_4)$	0.561	9.307	0.000	Significant

The model achieved an adjusted R^2 of 0.474, demonstrating that the three predictors collectively explained 47.4% of teacher performance variance. Organizational culture emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.561$), followed by professional responsibility ($\beta = 0.227$) and work motivation ($\beta = 0.148$). The substantial coefficient for organizational culture underscores its critical role in translating individual characteristics into performance outcomes.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Eight hypotheses were tested to examine direct effects, indirect effects, and simultaneous effects within the research model.

Hypothesis 1: Direct Effect of Work Motivation on Teacher Performance

The analysis revealed a significant direct effect of work motivation on teacher performance ($\rho_{41} = 0.148$, $t = 2.546$, $p = 0.012$), supporting the hypothesis that higher work motivation leads to improved teacher performance. This finding aligns with Self-Determination Theory, suggesting that intrinsically motivated teachers demonstrate greater engagement in professional tasks.

Hypothesis 2: Direct Effect of Work Motivation on Organizational Culture.

Work motivation showed a significant positive effect on organizational culture ($\rho_{31} = 0.194$, $t = 2.623$, $p = 0.010$), indicating that motivated teachers contribute actively to shaping positive school cultures. This reciprocal relationship suggests that motivation serves not merely as an outcome of culture but as an antecedent that helps construct organizational values and norms.

Hypothesis 3: Direct Effect of Professional Responsibility on Teacher Performance

Professional responsibility demonstrated a significant direct effect on teacher performance ($\rho_{42} = 0.227$, $t = 3.815$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that teachers who embrace professional

accountability exhibit superior performance. This finding supports the theoretical proposition that responsibility functions as a behavioral driver that ensures task completion and quality maintenance.

Hypothesis 4: Direct Effect of Professional Responsibility on Organizational Culture

The analysis confirmed a significant effect of professional responsibility on organizational culture ($\rho_{32} = 0.298$, $t = 4.030$, $p < 0.001$), representing the strongest direct path among exogenous variables. This result indicates that responsible teachers serve as cultural carriers who institutionalize professional norms and standards within school environments.

Hypothesis 5: Direct Effect of Organizational Culture on Teacher Performance

Organizational culture exhibited the strongest direct effect on teacher performance ($\rho_{43} = 0.561$, $t = 9.307$, $p < 0.001$), confirming its pivotal role in determining professional outcomes. This substantial coefficient validates the theoretical positioning of organizational culture as a proximal predictor that mediates the influence of more distal individual factors.

Hypothesis 6: Indirect Effect of Work Motivation on Teacher Performance through Organizational Culture

The indirect effect was calculated as the product of path coefficients ($\rho_{31} \times \rho_{43} = 0.194 \times 0.561 = 0.109$), with Sobel test confirming significance ($t = 2.524$, $p < 0.05$). This finding establishes organizational culture as a significant mediator, transmitting approximately 42.5% of work motivation's total effect on performance through cultural pathways.

Hypothesis 7: Indirect Effect of Professional Responsibility on Teacher Performance through Organizational Culture

The indirect effect calculation ($\rho_{32} \times \rho_{43} = 0.298 \times 0.561 = 0.167$) yielded significant mediation ($t = 3.699$, $p < 0.001$). Professional responsibility demonstrated stronger indirect effects than work motivation, with organizational culture mediating approximately 42.4% of its total influence on performance.

Hypothesis 8: Simultaneous Effect of All Predictors on Teacher Performance

The simultaneous test yielded $F = 50.295$ ($p < 0.001$), significantly exceeding the critical F-value of 3.05. This result confirms that work motivation, professional responsibility, and organizational culture collectively exert significant influence on teacher performance, explaining 48.4% of total variance ($R^2 = 0.484$).

Model Fit Assessment

The goodness-of-fit test examined whether the proposed model adequately represented the empirical data. The Q coefficient was calculated as:

$$Q = (1 - R^2_m) / (1 - M) = (1 - 0.545) / (1 - 0.545) = 1.00$$

With χ^2 calculated as 0, falling below the critical χ^2 value of 1.654 ($df = 1$), the model was deemed to fit the data perfectly. This exceptional fit indicates that the reproduced correlation matrix closely approximates the sample correlation matrix, validating the theoretical structure proposed in this research.

Summary of Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Table 9. Summary of Effect Decomposition

Effect Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Proportion Mediated
$X_1 \rightarrow X_4$	0.148	0.109 (via X_3)	0.257	42.4%

$X_2 \rightarrow X_4$	0.227	0.167 (via X_3)	0.394	42.4%
$X_3 \rightarrow X_4$	0.561		0.561	

The effect decomposition reveals that organizational culture mediates substantial portions of both work motivation's and professional responsibility's influence on teacher performance. Notably, the indirect effects constitute nearly equal proportions (42.4%) for both exogenous variables, suggesting that cultural pathways are equally important for motivational and responsibility-based influences.

Research Limitations

Several limitations warrant acknowledgment. First, the reliance on self-reported questionnaire data may introduce social desirability bias, though the anonymous administration procedure mitigates this concern. Second, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences regarding temporal relationships among variables. Third, the study's geographic restriction to Kota Kisaran limits generalizability to broader educational contexts, though the theoretical framework supports conceptual transferability. Fourth, unexplained variance (51.6%) indicates that additional factors potentially including school leadership, resource availability, and policy environments contribute substantially to teacher performance beyond the measured constructs.

Despite these limitations, the research provides robust empirical evidence for the mediating role of organizational culture in teacher performance dynamics, offering actionable insights for educational administrators and policymakers seeking to enhance teaching quality through systematic cultural interventions.

This study reveals that organizational culture plays a pivotal mediating role in transforming individual teacher characteristics into performance outcomes, contributing 47.4% of explained variance. The substantial direct effect of organizational culture on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.561$, $p < 0.001$) aligns with Sibian & Ispas's (2021) theoretical framework positing culture as the "operating system" that determines whether individual motivations actualize into productive behaviors. This finding corroborates Shi et al (2024) and Surwiti et al (2025) meta-analytic evidence showing strong correlations ($r = 0.72$) between positive school cultures and superior teacher performance across diverse educational contexts.

The mediating effects demonstrate that organizational culture transmits 42.4% of work motivation's influence and 42.4% of professional responsibility's influence on performance, confirming Hayes's (2018) process model of mediation in educational settings. These proportional equivalences suggest that cultural pathways are equally critical for both motivational and accountability-based performance mechanisms, extending Byram et al (2022) social cognitive theory by identifying culture as the contextual bridge between individual dispositions and professional outcomes. The significant indirect effects ($t = 2.524$ and $t = 3.699$, respectively) validate that teacher performance emerges not merely from individual attributes but through their cultivation within supportive organizational environments.

Professional responsibility exhibited stronger predictive power than work motivation for both organizational culture ($\beta = 0.298$ vs. $\beta = 0.194$) and teacher performance ($\beta = 0.227$ vs. $\beta = 0.148$), supporting Zhang & Tian (2025) multidimensional framework of teacher professional responsibility. This finding suggests that accountability constructs may be more proximal predictors of performance than motivational drives, as responsibility encompasses behavioral commitment that directly translates into observable teaching practices. The results extend Huisman (2020) accountability theory by demonstrating that professional responsibility functions as both cultural carrier and performance driver within educational organizations.

The simultaneous influence of all three predictors ($F = 50.295$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.484$) supports Iqbal et al (2023) integrative model positing that individual performance emerges from motivation, commitment, and environmental factors operating synergistically. This collective explanatory power approaching 50% substantially exceeds unidimensional models, confirming Beckmann & Heckhausen (2025) proposition that comprehensive performance frameworks must accommodate personal, behavioral, and situational determinants. The findings suggest that educational interventions targeting single variables will yield limited returns compared to integrated approaches addressing motivation, responsibility, and culture simultaneously.

These results carry significant implications for educational management, indicating that school leaders should prioritize cultural development as the foundation for performance enhancement rather than focusing exclusively on individual teacher development. The mediating role of organizational culture implies that investments in motivational programs or accountability systems will underperform unless accompanied by cultural transformations that support their implementation. This conclusion aligns with Zeb et al (2021) Competing Values Framework, suggesting that clan cultures emphasizing collaboration and human development may optimally facilitate the translation of teacher motivation and responsibility into superior instructional outcomes.

Conclusion

This study concludes that organizational culture significantly mediates the relationship between work motivation, professional responsibility, and teacher performance among public junior high school teachers in Kota Kisaran, Indonesia. The findings demonstrate that while work motivation and professional responsibility exert direct positive effects on teacher performance, their influences are substantially transmitted through organizational cultural pathways, with culture alone explaining 47.4% of performance variance. The robust empirical model confirms that teacher performance emerges from the synergistic interaction of individual dispositions and organizational contexts rather than isolated factors, validating the theoretical integration of organizational behavior frameworks with cultural theory in educational settings.

Based on these findings, several practical recommendations are proposed for educational stakeholders. School principals should prioritize systematic cultural interventions including collaborative professional communities, shared value internalization, and supportive leadership modeling to create environments where teacher motivation and accountability translate effectively into instructional excellence. Policymakers at district and provincial levels must recognize that teacher performance enhancement requires simultaneous investment in motivational incentives, responsibility frameworks, and cultural infrastructure rather than fragmented initiatives. Future research should adopt longitudinal designs to establish causal temporalities, incorporate additional mediating variables such as instructional leadership and professional learning communities, and extend investigation to diverse geographic and institutional contexts to strengthen the generalizability of the cultural mediation model in educational organizations.

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