

## Transformational Leadership and Work Motivation as Predictors of Employee Engagement

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### ABSTRACT

Employee involvement in a government agency is influenced by several factors, namely transformational leadership style and work motivation. This study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership style and work motivation on employee involvement in Bawaslu Bengkulu Province. The population in this study was all employees of Bawaslu Bengkulu Province, totaling 30 employees. This research method uses a quantitative method with observation and questionnaire data collection techniques. Data analysis techniques used are analysis requirements tests consisting of normality tests and linearity tests, classical assumption tests, multiple linear regression tests, and hypothesis tests consisting of F tests and t tests.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Human resources (HR) is a crucial component in any organization, particularly within governmental institutions. HR encompasses not only intelligence, emotions, desires, abilities, and knowledge, but is also considered a strategic asset that drives organizational activities. The central role of human resources lies in their ability to execute policies and implement organizational functions effectively and efficiently. Consequently, the quality of human resources is a key determinant in the success of an institution in achieving its vision and mission. In the context of public administration, employees are fundamental actors who play a significant role in organizational development and public service delivery. Successful employees who demonstrate professionalism in carrying out their responsibilities contribute to institutional growth, while a supportive institution enhances employee well-being and satisfaction. There exists a reciprocal relationship in which both the institution and its personnel benefit from mutual performance improvement.

Every public sector organization expects its workforce to perform its duties optimally. High-performing employees are indicative of an institution that is capable of delivering public services that meet societal expectations. However, in practice, public perception of governmental services in Indonesia remains relatively negative. Common issues include poor service ethics, lack of empathy in employee interactions, and bureaucratic inefficiencies, persistent concerns that have become associated with many government institutions (Rina, 2022).

One such institution that plays a direct role in serving the public is the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu). Bawaslu of Bengkulu Province, located on Jalan Padang Harapan, Gading Cempaka District, Bengkulu City, is tasked with overseeing the implementation of elections in the region. Electoral supervision is vital to ensuring the integrity, fairness, and transparency of democratic processes. Elections, as a reflection of citizen participation in a democratic state, require trustworthy management to reflect the quality of the country's democracy. Hence, the effectiveness and performance of election officials are crucial for successful electoral processes (Arofah, 2016).

Employee engagement, which refers to the psychological state that defines the extent to which an individual identifies with and finds meaning in their work, is one of the key factors influencing institutional performance (Umam, 2010). Highly engaged employees perceive their work as significant, demonstrate enthusiasm, and exhibit strong organizational commitment. In Bawaslu's context, employee engagement plays a pivotal role in ensuring credible election oversight and public trust. Nonetheless, preliminary observations and interviews with Bawaslu Bengkulu staff, notably with Ms. Mutia Dani on 27 November 2024, revealed low levels of employee engagement. Reported issues included staff leaving the office before official hours, delayed task completion, insufficient presence during peak periods such as election campaigns, and a general lack of punctuality. These behavioral patterns suggest diminished work commitment and motivation, which may hamper organizational effectiveness and service delivery.

Given this context, leadership becomes a critical element in shaping employee behavior and enhancing engagement. Institutional leaders are responsible for fostering a conducive work environment, promoting motivation, and directing personnel toward organizational objectives. Leadership style, in particular, has a substantial impact on employee motivation and involvement. According to Kartono (2021), a leader's success in mobilizing subordinates largely depends on their ability to instill work motivation.

Transformational leadership has been identified as an effective approach to increasing both motivation and engagement. Bass and Riggio (2005) defined transformational leaders as those who inspire and motivate followers to achieve more than they initially thought possible. Such leaders pay close attention to individual employee needs, encourage personal growth, and promote a shared vision for the organization's advancement.

Transformational leadership is also positively associated with the development of a constructive organizational culture. Leaders who demonstrate enthusiasm, instill confidence, and model ethical behavior are more likely to foster full employee engagement. This is particularly critical in public service organizations, where employee behavior directly impacts the quality of service delivery. Alongside leadership, work motivation is another significant factor in influencing employee engagement. Hasibuan (2017) described motivation as an internal or external drive that prompts individuals to act and perform optimally. Motivation may arise from personal goals, the need for recognition, career aspirations, or even curiosity. Motivated employees generally exhibit higher productivity, stronger loyalty, and greater initiative in their work. Technological advancement has also contributed to a shift in work dynamics. As tasks become increasingly automated, human involvement, experiential engagement, and interpersonal interaction in the workplace may decline, leading to reduced motivation and engagement levels (Shalsabila et al., 2024). Thus, organizations must develop strategies that maintain workforce motivation in the face of such changes.

The case of Bawaslu Bengkulu illustrates a gap in employee commitment and motivation. It was observed that many staff members required close supervision and lacked the internal drive to perform in alignment with institutional objectives. This implies that leadership approaches need to be more human-centric and transformational to cultivate stronger employee dedication. This study focuses on two key variables: transformational leadership and work motivation, both of which are hypothesized to significantly influence employee engagement within the context of Bawaslu Bengkulu. The goal is to provide both theoretical and practical insights into improving human resource quality in government institutions and to serve as a foundation for policymaking aimed at enhancing the performance of public sector organizations.

In conclusion, improving employee engagement and motivation requires organizations to adopt transformational leadership practices, build a positive organizational culture, and provide opportunities for personal and professional growth. Based on these considerations, this research explores "Transformational

## Leadership and Work Motivation as Predictors of Employee Engagement at the Bengkulu Province Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu)”

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational leadership is a widely studied leadership paradigm that emphasizes the articulation of a compelling vision, the motivation and inspiration of followers, and the facilitation of organizational change through heightened levels of individual commitment and engagement. According to Bass et al. (2005), transformational leadership enhances employees' sense of commitment, loyalty, and performance through four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These dimensions empower employees to exceed performance expectations and align their personal goals with organizational objectives. Sheikh et al. (2013) explored the boundary conditions of this leadership style, finding that power distance does not moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement, particularly in cultures or organizations where perceived hierarchical distance is low. This implies that transformational leadership may operate effectively across various cultural contexts, fostering engagement regardless of structural authority levels.

Subsequent studies have reinforced the psychological and relational mechanisms through which transformational leadership operates. Afsar et al. (2019) demonstrated that transformational leaders tend to foster stronger relational bonds, leading to enhanced psychological safety, increased proactivity, and higher levels of engagement. In the public service domain, Caillier (2016) highlighted that transformational leadership is positively correlated with public service motivation and accountability, suggesting its relevance in bureaucratic and mission-driven organizations. Further, Pradhan and Jena (2022) revealed that transformational leadership significantly affects both emotional and cognitive engagement among public sector employees, especially in times of institutional change. Their findings underscore the adaptability and influence of this leadership style in dynamic policy environments. In a similar vein, Al Khajeh (2018) confirmed that transformational leadership positively impacts job performance and satisfaction in government institutions, emphasizing its role in improving public sector efficiency. Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2015) added that transformational leaders can cultivate innovation and commitment, thus enhancing employee involvement in creative and strategic processes.

Empirical evidence from Indonesian civil service contexts has also supported the theoretical claims. Benny Wijaya (2024) found that transformational leadership significantly affects employee engagement. The study revealed that each unit increase in transformational leadership contributes to a 0.387-unit increase in employee engagement, with an  $R^2$  value of 0.378. This means that 37.8% of the variance in employee engagement can be explained by the presence of transformational leadership. Moreover, the F-test value of 8.219 with a significance of 0.000 further validated the strength of this relationship. The study concludes that leaders who inspire, motivate, and support employee development contribute directly to higher levels of engagement in the workplace. In a regional government context, Nur (2017) found that transformational

leadership has a significant impact on performance-related engagement among civil servants in Kotabaru Regency. His findings emphasized the importance of individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence in driving employees to view their work as central to their self-concept and personal pride.

Lisabella (2021) also corroborated these findings through her statistical analysis, reporting a path coefficient of 0.11 and a t-value of 2.46, exceeding the critical threshold of 1.96. The study concluded that transformational leadership positively influences employee engagement and that an increase in leadership quality corresponds to higher levels of involvement among employees. In summary, the literature consistently shows that transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in fostering employee engagement across various organizational settings, including public sector institutions. The evidence from both global and Indonesian contexts highlights the capacity of transformational leaders to shape not only performance outcomes but also psychological commitment, emotional attachment, and proactive behavior among employees.

**H1: Transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on employee engagement.**

Work motivation remains a central theme in organizational behavior studies, particularly due to its essential role in enhancing employee engagement and performance. Motivation is commonly categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic types. According to Self Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2017), intrinsic motivation, where individuals engage in tasks for the inherent satisfaction, leads to increased creativity, persistence, and psychological well-being. Additionally, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory continues to provide relevant insights into workplace satisfaction, especially in public sector environments. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated the influence of motivation on employee outcomes. Wijesiri et al. (2020) reported that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation significantly impact the job performance of public employees in Sri Lanka. In the context of public service, Cho and Perry (2016) found that highly motivated civil servants show stronger organizational commitment and exhibit discretionary efforts beyond their formal responsibilities. In Indonesia, Nurjanah et al. (2021) emphasized that both financial and non-financial motivators contribute meaningfully to enhancing employee commitment and reducing absenteeism in the public sector. Similarly, Setiawan and Mahyuddin (2023) highlighted that effective motivational strategies are crucial for managing millennial employees within government institutions. Moreover, motivation has been found to interact closely with employee engagement. Great (2023) argued that engagement, both emotional and cognitive, is a crucial element in building a productive and successful organizational culture. Employees who perceive opportunities for career growth are more likely to be motivated and engaged, resulting in increased contributions to organizational success. However, recent findings suggest nuanced dynamics. Benny Wijaya (2024) reported that while work motivation does not have a statistically significant direct effect on employee engagement ( $t = 1.759, p = 0.084 > 0.05$ ), the variable still plays an important role within a broader regression

model when combined with other factors. This suggests an indirect or conditional influence of motivation on engagement, rather than a direct causal relationship.

In contrast, Yustitie Evelina Sitorus (2022) found that high employee engagement positively influences work motivation. Engaged employees tend to exhibit greater enthusiasm and energy, thus reinforcing their drive to contribute toward organizational goals. Similarly, Eka Nurdiansyah (2016) found significant simultaneous and partial effects between work satisfaction, employee engagement, and motivation, as evidenced by F-test and t-test results using regression analysis. The findings confirm that employee engagement has a strong and significant influence on work motivation. Taken together, these findings indicate a reciprocal relationship between motivation and engagement, and suggest that motivated employees are more likely to be engaged, and vice versa. The literature also reflects that the strength and direction of this relationship may vary depending on contextual factors such as leadership, job design, and career development opportunities.

**H2: Work motivation has a significant positive effect on employee engagement.**

Employee engagement has emerged as a vital construct in organizational behavior research over the past decade, particularly within the context of public sector institutions. Engagement is conceptualized as the simultaneous investment of an individual's cognitive, emotional, and physical energies into their work role (Kahn, 1990). It manifests through heightened dedication, absorption, and vigor in daily tasks. Research by Bakker and Albrecht (2018) revealed that highly engaged employees exhibit greater productivity, creativity, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Saks (2019) further emphasized its role in reducing turnover intentions and enhancing job satisfaction, particularly in complex organizational environments. The role of leadership, especially transformational leadership, in shaping engagement has received considerable empirical attention. Transformational leadership is defined as a style in which leaders articulate a clear vision, stimulate intellectual growth, and inspire followers to transcend their self-interests for the benefit of the organization (Bass et al., 2005). Macey and Schneider (2015) noted that leadership behaviors strongly influence employee perceptions of fairness, support, and autonomy, all of which are antecedents of engagement. This is particularly true in bureaucratic settings, where rigid hierarchies often dampen individual motivation.

Recent empirical studies support this link. Rasheed et al. (2022), in a cross-national study in Southeast Asia, found that transformational leadership significantly predicted employee engagement, particularly when combined with perceived organizational support. Similarly, Widodo et al. (2021) showed that employee engagement acts as a crucial driver for improving service quality and public trust in government institutions across Indonesia. In the Indonesian context, Suriagiri (2020) defined leadership as a process of motivating, guiding, and empowering subordinates to achieve organizational goals efficiently. Transformational leadership, in particular, is associated with fostering positive behavioral change among employees by focusing on long-term goals, aligning individual values with organizational vision, and cultivating trust and

commitment. Putra (2021) found empirical evidence that transformational leadership positively influences employee engagement, mediated by intrinsic motivation. The study reported a high path coefficient ( $\beta = 0.797$ ;  $t = 22.846$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), confirming the strength of this relationship. In the hospitality industry, where engagement is pivotal for service excellence, such leadership practices significantly enhance employee initiative and problem-solving.

Febrianti (2017) also demonstrated that transformational leadership improves work motivation and, in turn, drives higher engagement among millennial employees in digital enterprises. The findings suggest that this leadership style aligns well with the values and expectations of younger generations, who seek meaningful work and personal development opportunities. Supporting this, Afiani (2016) concluded that in public organizations, transformational leadership significantly affects both employee motivation and engagement levels. With a t-statistic of 4.727 ( $p < 0.05$ ), the study underscored that motivated employees under visionary leadership are more likely to be cognitively and emotionally invested in their roles.

Taken together, these findings underscore the relevance of transformational leadership as a catalyst for employee engagement across both private and public sectors. The inclusion of work motivation as a mediating variable provides a more nuanced understanding of the psychological processes underlying this relationship. Leaders who foster purpose, autonomy, and professional growth tend to activate employees' intrinsic motivation, thereby enhancing their commitment, performance, and retention.

H3: Work motivation mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement.

Table 1.1 of Key Literature

Variable	Key Authors & Years	Focus Area
Transformational Leadership	Afsar et al. (2019), Caillier (2016), Pradhan & Jena (2022)	Impact on innovation, commitment, and engagement
Work Motivation	Ryan & Deci (2017), Cho & Perry (2016), Nurjanah et al. (2021)	Intrinsic vs extrinsic, public service motivation
Employee Engagement	Bakker & Albrecht (2018), Saks (2019), Rasheed et al. (2022)	Engagement outcomes, leadership support

From the results of the literature review of this research, it can be concluded that the contextual framework.

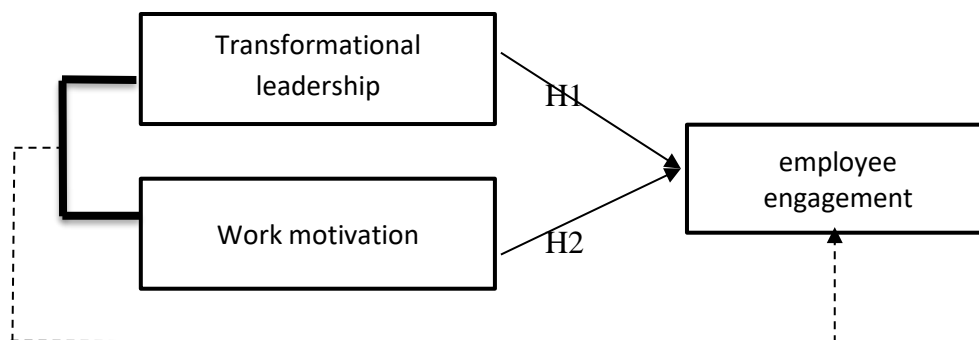


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative approach with a survey method to examine the influence of transformational leadership and work motivation on employee engagement at the Regional General Elections Supervisory Agency (Badan Pengawas Pemilu or Bawaslu) of Bengkulu Province, Indonesia. This approach is selected to empirically test the formulated hypotheses and to analyze the relationships among variables within a structured framework. The research was conducted at the Bawaslu Office of Bengkulu Province, located at Jalan Padang Harapan, Gading Cempaka District, Bengkulu City. The data collection period began in October 2024 and continued until the completion of data analysis.

The population in this study comprises all permanent employees of Bawaslu Bengkulu Province, totaling 30 individuals. Given the relatively small population size, the sampling technique employed is total sampling (census), in which the entire population is used as the research sample. This technique ensures the comprehensiveness and generalizability of the findings to the targeted population. Primary data were collected through a structured, closed-ended questionnaire developed based on theoretical indicators for each research variable. A five-point Likert scale was applied to measure the respondents' perceptions, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). In addition, field observation was conducted to supplement the data with contextual understanding of organizational behavior and leadership practices. Prior to the main data collection, a pilot test was conducted with 30 respondents at the Bengkulu Provincial Food and Drug Administration (Badan POM) to assess the validity and reliability of the research instruments. Validity was tested using Pearson's correlation, with an item considered valid if the correlation coefficient ( $r$ -count) exceeds the critical value ( $r$ -table = 0.374). Instrument reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold of  $\geq 0.60$  indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Data analysis was conducted in several stages. Descriptive statistics were first employed to describe the demographic profile of respondents and their perceptions of the study variables. Classical assumption tests were then performed, including the normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov method), multicollinearity test (Tolerance  $> 0.10$  and VIF  $< 10$ ), and heteroscedasticity test (Glejser method), to ensure the suitability of the regression model.

To examine the effect of the independent variables, multiple linear regression analysis was employed using the following model:  $Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$ , where  $Y$  represents employee engagement,  $X_1$  refers to transformational leadership, and  $X_2$  denotes work motivation. Hypothesis testing was conducted through both partial (t-test) and simultaneous (F-test) significance tests. The hypothesis is accepted if the t-value  $>$  t-table or F-value  $>$  F-table at the 5% significance level. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was also calculated to measure the extent to which the independent variables explain variations in the dependent variable. All statistical analyses were conducted using the latest version of SPSS software to ensure accuracy and robustness of the results. Through this methodical approach, the study aims to contribute empirical

evidence to the literature on leadership and employee engagement in public sector institutions, particularly within Indonesia's electoral supervisory bodies.

**RESEARCH RESULT**

This study aimed to examine the influence of transformational leadership and work motivation on employee engagement within Bawaslu Bengkulu Province. The research employed a quantitative approach using a survey method, with data collected from 30 employees through structured questionnaires. The research process involved several key steps as outlined below.

1. Data collection and respondent profile the data were collected through questionnaires distributed to all employees.

Tabel 1.2 The respondent profile was analyzed and categorized

Respondent Characteristics	Total	Presentase
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	21	70,0%
Female	9	30,0%
	30	100%
<b>Age</b>		
20 - 30 Year	9	30,0%
31 - 40 Year	13	43,3%
41 - 50 Year	8	26,7%
	30	100%
<b>Last education</b>		
High School	8	26,7%
Bachelor's Degree	14	46,7%
Master's Degree	8	26,7%
	30	100%
<b>Length of work</b>		
< 1 Year	2	6,7%
3 Year	9	30,0%
≥ 5 Year	19	63,3%
	30	100%

2. Instrument test validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the measurement instruments were appropriate. The validity test used pearson correlation with a significance threshold of 0.374. All items showed valid results.

Tabel 1.3 Validity tests

Variable	Indicator	Item Statement	Person correlation	R Table	Description
Employee Engagement (Y)	Passion	1	0,677	0,374	Valid
		2	0,714	0,374	Valid
	Dedication	3	0,841	0,374	Valid
		4	0,712	0,374	Valid
	Absorption	5	0,754	0,374	Valid
		6	0,837	0,374	Valid
Idealized influence		1	0,713	0,374	Valid
		2	0,651	0,374	Valid

Transformational Leadership (X1)	Intellectual stimulation	3	0,591	0,374	Valid
		4	0,772	0,374	Valid
	Individual consideration	5	0,737	0,374	Valid
		6	0,712	0,374	Valid
	Inspirational motivation	7	0,556	0,374	Valid
		8	0,523	0,374	Valid
Work motivation (X2)	Need achievement	1	0,789	0,374	Valid
		2	0,531	0,374	Valid
	Need affiliation	3	0,819	0,374	Valid
		4	0,709	0,374	Valid
	Need of power	5	0,509	0,374	Valid
		6	0,745	0,374	Valid

Reliability testing employed Cronbach's Alpha, indicating strong internal consistency across all variables: employee engagement (0.854), transformational leadership (0.825), and work motivation (0.815).

Table 1.4 Reliability test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Employee Engagement (Y)	0,854	Reliabel
Transformational Leadership (X1)	0,825	Reliabel
Work Motivation (X2)	0,815	Reliabel

From the table above, it can be seen that all variables are reliably measured with Cronbach's Alpha > 0.60. Therefore, the results of each variable test are reliable.

### 3. Classical Assumption Testing

A normality test is performed to determine whether the variable data is normally distributed. This normality test uses the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in SPSS. Data are considered normally distributed if the p-value is > 0.05.

Table 1.5 Normality test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N	30	
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	3.14704034
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.122
	Positive	.090
	Negative	-.122
Test Statistic	.122	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.200 <sup>c,d</sup>	
a. Test distribution is Normal. b. Calculated from data. c. Lilliefors Significance Correction. d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.		

4. Testing for multicollinearity using tolerance values and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). If the tolerance value is > 0.10 and the VIF value is < 10 for the independent variable.

Table 1.6 multicollinearity test

Variabel	Tolerance	VIF	Information
Transformational leadership (X1)	0,950	1.053	Non multicollinearity
Work Motivation (X2)	0,950	1.053	Non multicollinearity

5. Heteroscedasticity test If the variance from one residual to another observation remains constant, it is called homoscedasticity and if it is different, it is called heteroscedasticity. To see the symptoms of heteroscedasticity, namely by comparing the significance value in the "Coefficients" output table with the alpha value (0.05), if the significance value of the calculated result is > than the alpha value (0.05) then it can be concluded that there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity in the regression model.

Table 1.7 Heteroscedasticity test

Variabel	Sig	Information
Transformational leadership (X1)	0,360	No Symptoms of Heteroscedasticity
Work Motivation (X2)	0,462	No Symptoms of Heteroscedasticity

6. Multiple linear regression analysis revealed that both independent variables had significant positive effects on employee engagement. The regression model is as follows.

Table 1.8 Multiple linear regression analysis

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
		B	Std. Error	Beta
1	(Constant)	2.883	1.961	
	Transformational leadership	.344	.051	.556
	Work Motivation	.437	.060	.604

a. Dependent Variable

$$Y = 2.883 + 0.344X_1 + 0.437X_2$$

Where: Y = Employee Engagement, X<sub>1</sub> = Transformational Leadership and X<sub>2</sub> = Work Motivation. Both transformational leadership (t = 6.686, p < 0.001) and work motivation (t = 7.265, p < 0.001) significantly influenced employee engagement.

7. Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>) the R Square value was 0.823, indicating that 82.3% of the variance in employee engagement is explained by transformational leadership and work motivation. The remaining 17.7% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study.

Table 1.9 Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.907 <sup>a</sup>	.823	.810	1.46768

a. Predictors: (Constant)  
b. Dependent Variable

8. Hypothesis Testing partial t-test results confirmed

Table 2.0 t-test

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.883	1.961		1.471	.153
	Transformational leadership	.344	.051	.556	6.686	.000
	Work Motivation	.437	.060	.604	7.265	.000

a. Dependent Variable

H<sub>1</sub>: Transformational leadership significantly influences employee engagement.

H<sub>2</sub>: Work motivation significantly influences employee engagement.

Simultaneous F-test yielded an F-value of 62.731 ( $p < 0.001$ ), confirming that both variables jointly have a significant effect on employee engagement.

Table 2.1 F-test

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	270.255	2	135.127	62.731	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	58.160	27	2.154		
	Total	328.415	29			

a. Dependent Variable  
b. Predictors: (Constant)

**DISCUSSION**

This section allows you to describe your research findings academically. You may not enter figures related to your statistical tests here; instead, you should explain those numbers here. You should structure your discussion with academic support for your studies and a good explanation according to the specific area you are investigating.

This study explored the influence of transformational leadership style and work motivation on employee engagement within the context of Bawaslu (Election Supervisory Body) in Bengkulu Province. Through the distribution of questionnaires and subsequent data analysis, important insights were gained regarding how leadership behaviors and internal motivational factors affect the level of involvement employees demonstrate in their work. The demographic characteristics of the respondents revealed a predominantly male workforce, primarily aged between 31 and 40 years. Most respondents possessed a bachelor’s degree and had been working at Bawaslu for five years or more. This composition indicates a relatively mature and experienced public workforce, which may influence how leadership and motivation factors are perceived and how they translate into employee engagement.

One of the key findings of this study is the high level of employee engagement observed at Bawaslu Bengkulu. Employees reported feeling committed to their work, aligning their roles with both their educational backgrounds and prior experiences. Many expressed satisfaction with their

leaders, who demonstrated transformational behaviors such as encouraging feedback, offering assistance during challenges, and motivating their teams. These characteristics are central to transformational leadership, which emphasizes inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and the articulation of a compelling vision (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The findings align with the theoretical framework that positions transformational leadership as a catalyst for enhancing employee engagement. Employees under transformational leaders often feel empowered and valued, leading them to invest greater cognitive, emotional, and behavioral energy into their work roles. This resonates with prior studies such as those by Wijaya (2024), which found that transformational leadership not only fosters greater employee commitment but also directly contributes to increased work motivation and a sense of purpose.

Moreover, this study confirmed that transformational leadership had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement. Leaders who demonstrate openness to suggestions, support for their staff, and an inclusive vision are perceived more favorably and are better able to inspire discretionary effort among employees. These leaders cultivate a sense of ownership and psychological safety, which are key elements in fostering engagement. The results corroborate earlier research conducted by Nur (2017) and Lisabella (2021), who also concluded that transformational leadership contributes meaningfully to the enhancement of employee engagement through idealized influence and motivational encouragement. In addition to leadership style, work motivation emerged as another significant predictor of employee engagement. Employees at Bawaslu reported a high degree of intrinsic motivation, often driven by their own sense of responsibility and desire to contribute effectively to organizational goals. While most employees were highly motivated, it is worth noting that a small subset demonstrated lower levels of enthusiasm. This underscores the need for differentiated motivational strategies tailored to individual needs and career stages.

The study's findings affirm the argument by Great (2023), who emphasized that motivated employees are more likely to engage emotionally and intellectually with their work. When employees perceive meaningful opportunities for personal and professional growth, their intrinsic motivation strengthens, which subsequently enhances their engagement. This is consistent with the research of Sitorus (2022) and Nurdiansyah (2016), both of whom found a positive correlation between work motivation and employee engagement. Interestingly, when transformational leadership and work motivation were analyzed collectively, their combined impact on employee engagement was found to be significant. This reinforces the view that leadership and motivation do not function in isolation but are interrelated constructs that jointly shape employee attitudes and behaviors. A transformational leader may be instrumental in shaping the motivational environment of the workplace, fostering a climate where employees feel energized, appreciated, and driven to achieve organizational success.

These findings are further supported by the conceptualization of employee engagement as a psychological state where individuals become cognitively and emotionally invested in their work (Kahn, 1990). Employees who are engaged not only perform their duties effectively but also take initiative and show resilience in the face of challenges. The literature consistently suggests that engaged employees are more productive, innovative, and committed to their organizations. In the case of Bawaslu Bengkulu, the combined effect of a supportive leadership style and high work motivation appears to have contributed to an overall positive work environment. Employees described a workplace characterized by mutual support, respect, and collaboration. They expressed satisfaction with the compensation they received and with interpersonal relationships among colleagues, all of which are known factors that reinforce employee engagement.

While the data generally point to positive trends, the presence of a minority of employees with lower motivation levels suggests that engagement is a dynamic phenomenon influenced by multiple organizational and personal factors. Managers must therefore remain vigilant in identifying early signs of disengagement and address them through personalized interventions. These results bear important practical implications. First, leadership development initiatives should prioritize the cultivation of transformational leadership behaviors among supervisors and managers. Training programs focused on empathy, vision communication, and motivational techniques can help foster a leadership culture that promotes engagement. Second, motivation-enhancing strategies such as recognition systems, career development opportunities, and participatory decision-making should be systematically implemented. In addition, performance management systems must be aligned with the principles of engagement by emphasizing developmental feedback and aligning individual goals with organizational values. Creating a psychologically safe environment where employees feel heard and valued will further reinforce their commitment and performance.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the antecedents of employee engagement. It empirically substantiates the dual role of leadership and motivation as critical enablers of engagement within the public sector context, particularly within supervisory bodies like Bawaslu. As organizations continue to evolve and adapt to changes in governance and public expectations, sustaining high levels of employee engagement will remain a strategic imperative. In conclusion, this study offers robust evidence that transformational leadership and work motivation are integral to fostering employee engagement at Bawaslu Bengkulu Province. While individual factors such as age, experience, and education level may moderate these effects, the overarching message is clear: effective leadership and meaningful motivation jointly empower employees to become fully engaged contributors to organizational success.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study concludes that transformational leadership and work motivation significantly influence employee engagement within Bawaslu Bengkulu

Province. Transformational leadership marked by inspirational motivation, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation creates a conducive work environment that fosters emotional connection and commitment among employees. Likewise, work motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, enhances employees' willingness to perform beyond expectations, contributing to higher engagement levels. The combination of these two variables demonstrates a synergistic effect, where supportive leadership amplifies motivation and collectively drives employee engagement. These findings underscore the importance of a leadership style that not only directs but also inspires and empowers, especially within public sector institutions that face complex demands for transparency, integrity, and performance. Based on these results, it is recommended that Bawaslu invest in structured leadership development programs aimed at strengthening transformational capabilities among managers and supervisors. Training in empathy, communication, and vision-setting is crucial to foster a workplace culture where employees feel valued and inspired. Simultaneously, motivation-enhancing practices such as transparent reward systems, recognition programs, participative decision-making, and opportunities for professional growth should be institutionalized. Organizations are also encouraged to routinely assess engagement and motivation levels to identify areas of concern early and tailor interventions accordingly. By integrating leadership development and motivational strategies, Bawaslu can build a more engaged, productive, and resilient workforce that aligns with its strategic objectives and public mandate.

#### **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Like all empirical studies, this research is not without limitations. First, the study was conducted within a single institutional context, Bawaslu Bengkulu Province, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other public sector organizations or different regional settings. Cultural, structural, and managerial differences across institutions could influence how transformational leadership and motivation affect employee engagement. Second, the use of self-reported questionnaires introduces the possibility of response bias, where participants may provide socially desirable answers rather than reflecting their actual experiences. Third, the cross-sectional design of the study restricts the ability to draw causal conclusions; the observed relationships capture a moment in time without accounting for potential changes over time or external influences. Future research could address these limitations by employing a longitudinal design to observe how transformational leadership and work motivation influence employee engagement over an extended period. Expanding the scope of the study to include multiple institutions across various regions or comparing public and private sector organizations would also enhance the robustness and applicability of the findings. Additionally, incorporating qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions could enrich the understanding of the mechanisms behind employee engagement and uncover contextual factors that quantitative methods may overlook. Exploring other potential mediating or moderating variables such as organizational culture,

psychological safety, or job satisfaction may also offer a more comprehensive perspective on the dynamics at play. These directions would contribute significantly to advancing knowledge in leadership, motivation, and engagement research.

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