

## The influence of transformational leadership on ASN performance through the core values of ethical ASN at the BKPSDM Tebing Tinggi City

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional terhadap kinerja Aparatur Sipil Negara (ASN) melalui *Core Values* ASN BerAKHLAK pada BKPSDM Kota Tebing Tinggi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui penyebaran kuesioner kepada 42 responden ASN pada BKPSDM Kota Tebing Tinggi. Metode analisis data yang digunakan meliputi uji validitas, uji reliabilitas, uji asumsi klasik, dan analisis mediasi menggunakan aplikasi *Jamovi* melalui fitur *Mediation Analysis* pada modul *medmod*. Uji validitas dilakukan menggunakan *Pearson Product Moment*, sedangkan uji reliabilitas menggunakan *Cronbach's Alpha*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional berpengaruh positif terhadap *Core Values* ASN BerAKHLAK. Selanjutnya, *Core Values* ASN BerAKHLAK berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja ASN. Kepemimpinan transformasional juga berpengaruh positif terhadap kinerja ASN. Selain itu, hasil analisis mediasi menunjukkan bahwa *Core Values* ASN BerAKHLAK mampu memediasi pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional terhadap kinerja ASN pada BKPSDM Kota Tebing Tinggi.

**Kata Kunci:** kepemimpinan transformasional; core values asn berakhlak; kinerja asn; uji mediasi

### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to analyze the influence of transformational leadership on the performance of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) through the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK at the BKPSDM of Tebing Tinggi City. This study uses a quantitative approach with data collection techniques through distributing questionnaires to 42 ASN respondents at the BKPSDM of Tebing Tinggi City. Data analysis methods used include validity tests, reliability tests, classical assumption tests, and mediation analysis using the Jamovi application through the Mediation Analysis feature in the medmod module. The validity test was carried out using Pearson Product Moment, while the reliability test used Cronbach's Alpha. The results of the study indicate that transformational leadership has a positive effect on the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK. Furthermore, the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK have a positive and significant effect on ASN performance. Transformational leadership also has a positive effect on ASN performance. In addition, the results of the mediation analysis show that the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK are able to mediate the effect of transformational leadership on ASN performance at the BKPSDM of Tebing Tinggi City.*

**Keyword:** transformational leadership; core values of civil servants with morals; civil servant performance; mediation test

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) is a key indicator of the quality of public services and a reflection of the effectiveness of government bureaucracy (Kareni et al., 2025). Optimal ASN performance is an essential prerequisite for realizing good governance, particularly in delivering fast, accurate, and accountable public services. However, various national indicators suggest that improvements in ASN performance have not yet been fully optimized (Ngara et al., 2026). Data from the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform (PANRB) indicate that, as of 2023, the achievement of the Government Agency Performance Accountability System (SAKIP) in a number of local governments remains in the “BB” category, with average scores ranging from 70 to 80, indicating that organizational performance is not yet fully outcome-oriented (BPBD, 2023). This condition is further supported by a report from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) through the national ASN Work Behavior Survey, which reveals that the work culture and public service satisfaction index at the regional level continue to fluctuate and have not reached the targeted excellence index. Maladministration and the inefficient use of working hours remain major concerns identified in the evaluation (Central Statistics Agency, 2025).

As part of bureaucratic reform, the government, through the Ministry of PANRB, established the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK in 2021 as the national fundamental values for all civil servants (Sari et al., 2026). These values—Service-Oriented, Accountable, Competent, Harmonious, Loyal, Adaptive, and Collaborative—are expected to serve as behavioral guidelines for ASN in carrying out their duties (Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021). Conceptually, the implementation of strong organizational values can enhance individual integrity, commitment, and performance within an organization (Yusuf et al., 2024). However, in practice, the implementation of the BerAKHLAK values still faces various challenges. Several evaluations indicate that these values have not been fully internalized into the daily work behavior of civil servants and often remain normative and symbolic (Yuniawanti & Wulandari, 2025). This is reflected in inconsistencies in public service delivery, low organizational commitment, and weak employee attachment to organizational values (Ariyantini & Puterisari, 2025). Therefore, the issue of ASN performance is not solely related to formal policies but also concerns how these values are understood, accepted, and implemented in everyday work practices.

In this context, leadership plays a strategic role as a driver of organizational change. Transformational leadership is theoretically capable of influencing employees’ ways of thinking and behavior through inspiration, motivation, and the development of a shared vision (Masrifah & Kuswinarno, 2024; Muliawan & Ulum, 2025). Transformational leaders not only provide direction but also instill organizational values in their subordinates, thereby creating alignment between individual and organizational goals (Puspita et al., 2025). Numerous studies have demonstrated that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, particularly through increased work motivation (Nurlaela et al., 2025), job satisfaction (Masrifah & Kuswinarno, 2024), and employee engagement (Naimah & Sari, 2022). Furthermore, previous studies indicate that organizational values or work culture can function as an intervening variable that strengthens the influence of leadership on employee performance (Serenita & Miftahurrohman, 2025). This suggests that leadership is more effective in improving performance when supported by work values that are well understood and consistently practiced by all organizational members (Pramudya et al., 2023). Nevertheless, studies integrating transformational leadership, the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK, and ASN performance within a single comprehensive analytical framework remain relatively limited, particularly in the context of regional personnel development agencies.

Based on the identified research gap, the novelty of this study lies in the empirical examination of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK as an intervening variable mediating the relationship between transformational leadership and ASN performance, an integrative model that has rarely been explored simultaneously in the Indonesian public sector management literature. While previous studies have generally examined organizational culture in a broader context, this study specifically operationalizes the standardized BerAKHLAK values introduced under the latest bureaucratic reform policies. The proposed research is conducted at the Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDM) of Tebing Tinggi City, a regional government institution responsible for developing the quality of public sector human resources. This study aims to analyze the effect of transformational leadership on ASN performance, examine the influence of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK on ASN performance, and investigate the mediating role of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK in the relationship between transformational leadership and ASN performance. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the advancement of public sector human resource management literature by providing empirical evidence for the proposed path analysis model, while also offering practical recommendations for local government policymakers to optimize ASN performance through strengthening transformational leadership and promoting the substantive internalization of organizational values.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a causal-associative research design aimed at examining the influence of transformational leadership on the performance of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) through the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK as an intervening variable. The research variables consisted of transformational leadership as the independent variable, the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK as the mediating variable, and ASN performance as the dependent variable. The population of this study comprised all civil servants working at the Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDM) of Tebing Tinggi City. Using a saturated sampling (census) technique due to the relatively small population size, the study involved a total of 42 respondents.

The research procedure was conducted systematically and chronologically, beginning with problem identification and a literature review to formulate hypotheses based on transformational leadership theory and the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK. The next stage involved developing a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, which was then distributed directly to the 42 respondents at BKPSDM Tebing Tinggi City to collect primary data. After the primary data were obtained, secondary data were collected from the agency's internal documents, followed by a data cleaning process before proceeding to statistical analysis. All data processing and statistical analyses in this study were performed using the latest version of the Jamovi software, which was selected for its efficiency in conducting path and mediation analyses.

The validity test was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment correlation in Jamovi by examining the Corrected Item–Total Correlation values. An item was considered valid if it had a correlation coefficient greater than 0.30 (Azwar, 2019). Furthermore, reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold value greater than 0.70 indicating that the instrument was reliable and internally consistent (Kline, 1999). The next stage involved testing the classical assumptions, including the normality test using the Shapiro–Wilk or Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, the multicollinearity test based on the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values, and the heteroscedasticity test to ensure that the regression model satisfied the underlying assumptions and was free from estimation bias.

The final stage of the study involved path analysis and hypothesis testing using the *Mediation Analysis* feature in the *medmod* module of the Jamovi application. This analysis was employed to examine the effect of transformational leadership on the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK, as well as the effects of transformational leadership and the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK on ASN performance. The direct effects were evaluated by examining the path coefficients, *t*-values, and *p*-values for each relationship between variables. Meanwhile, the indirect effects (mediation effects) were assessed using the bootstrap method with 5,000 bootstrap samples and a 95% confidence interval. The mediation effect was considered significant if the *p*-value was less than 0.05 or if the confidence interval did not include zero. This analytical procedure follows the mediation and multivariate analysis approach proposed by Sarstedt et al. (2021) for path analysis and mediation effect testing.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Characteristics of Respondents

The characteristics of the respondents in this study included gender, age, educational attainment, and years of service. Based on the questionnaires distributed to 42 respondents at the Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDM) of Tebing Tinggi City, the majority of respondents were female. In terms of age, most respondents were under 30 years old or between 31 and 40 years old. Regarding educational attainment, the majority held a D-IV/Bachelor's (S-1) degree. Furthermore, based on years of service, most respondents had either less than five years or more than ten years of work experience.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Features	Category	Quantity	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Women	27	64,3%
	Male	15	35,7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Age</b>	< 30 years old	20	47,6%
	31–40 years	14	33,3%
	41–50 years	5	11,9%
	> 50 years	1	2,4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Final Education</b>	SMA	2	4,8%
	D3	4	9,5%
	D-IV/S-1	28	66,7%
	S-2	8	19,0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Tenure</b>	< 5 years	18	42,9%

Features	Category	Quantity	Percentage
	5–10 years	11	26,2%
	> 10 years	13	31,0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>

### B. Validity and Reliability Tests

The validity test results indicated that all statement items measuring Transformational Leadership, the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK, and ASN Performance had corrected item–total correlation values above 0.30. Therefore, all items were considered valid and suitable for use as research instruments.

The reliability test results showed that the Transformational Leadership variable obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.961, the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK variable obtained 0.965, and the ASN Performance variable obtained 0.934. Since all Cronbach's Alpha values exceeded 0.70, the research instruments were considered reliable and internally consistent.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Remarks
<b>Transformational Leadership (X)</b>	0,961	Reliabel
<b>Core Values ASN BerAKHLAK (Z)</b>	0,965	Reliabel
<b>ASN Performance (Y)</b>	0,934	Reliabel

### C. Classical Assumption Tests

#### 1) Normality Test

The normality test was performed using both the Shapiro–Wilk and Kolmogorov–Smirnov methods. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test produced a significance value of 0.444 ( $> 0.05$ ), indicating that the data were normally distributed. Although the Shapiro–Wilk test yielded a significance value of 0.016 ( $< 0.05$ ), the analysis could still proceed because the sample size exceeded 30 respondents.

Table 3. Normality Test Results

Method	Statistics	Say.	Remarks
<b>Shapiro–Wilk</b>	0,933	0,016	Abnormal
<b>Kolmogorov–Smirnov</b>	0,133	0,444	Normal

#### 2) Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test was conducted by examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values. The results showed that all independent variables had VIF values below 10 and tolerance values greater than 0.10, indicating that no multicollinearity was present in the regression model.

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Results

Variabel	LIVE	Tolerance	Remarks
<b>Transformational Leadership (X)</b>	1,65	0,605	Multicollinearity does not occur
<b>Core Values ASN BerAKHLAK (Z)</b>	1,65	0,605	Multicollinearity does not occur

#### 3) Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroscedasticity was assessed using the Breusch–Pagan, Goldfeld–Quandt, and Harrison–McCabe tests. The results indicated that the Goldfeld–Quandt test produced a significance value of 0.902 and the Harrison–McCabe test produced a significance value of 0.921, both of which exceeded 0.05. Therefore, the regression model was considered free from heteroscedasticity.

Table 5. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Method	Statistics	Say.	Remarks
<b>Breusch–Pagan</b>	8,73	0,013	There is heteroscedasticity
<b>Goldfield–Quandt</b>	0,536	0,902	Heteroscedasticity does not occur
<b>Harrison–McCabe</b>	0,644	0,921	Heteroscedasticity does not occur

### D. Mediation Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The mediation analysis revealed that the indirect effect of Transformational Leadership on ASN Performance through the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK had an estimated coefficient of 0.306 with a significance level of  $p < 0.001$ . This finding indicates that the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK significantly mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and ASN Performance.

In addition, the direct effect analysis showed that Transformational Leadership had a coefficient value of 0.175 with a significance level of  $p = 0.039$  ( $< 0.05$ ), indicating a positive and significant direct effect on ASN Performance. Meanwhile, the total effect yielded a coefficient value of 0.480 with a significance level of  $p < 0.001$ . These findings suggest that Transformational Leadership positively influences ASN Performance both directly and indirectly through the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK.

Table 6. Mediation Analysis Results

Influence	Estimate	SE	Z	Say.	Remarks
<b>Indirect Effect (X → Z → Y)</b>	0,306	0,0790	3,87	<0.001	Signifikan
<b>Direct Effect (X → Y)</b>	0,175	0,0847	2,06	0,039	Signifikan
<b>Total Effect</b>	0,480	0,0880	5,46	<0.001	Signifikan

Furthermore, the path analysis demonstrated that the effect of Transformational Leadership on the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK had a coefficient value of 0.633 with a significance level of  $p < 0.001$ . This indicates that better implementation of transformational leadership is associated with stronger internalization of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK among civil servants. Moreover, the effect of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK on ASN Performance had a coefficient value of 0.483 with a significance level of  $p < 0.001$ , indicating a positive and significant relationship.

Table 7. Track Test Results

Jalur	Estimate	SE	Z	Sig.	Remarks
X → Z	0,633	0,1208	5,24	<0.001	Signifikan
From → Y	0,483	0,0841	5,74	<0.001	Signifikan
X → Y	0,175	0,0847	2,06	0,039	Signifikan

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK function as a partial mediating variable in the relationship between Transformational Leadership and ASN Performance. This conclusion is supported by the fact that both the direct and indirect effects are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### E. Discussion

#### 1) The Influence of Transformational Leadership on the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK

The results of this study indicate that transformational leadership has a positive effect on the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK at the Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDM) of Tebing Tinggi City. This finding suggests that the better the implementation of transformational leadership within the organization, the stronger the internalization and application of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK among employees. Transformational leadership is capable of providing inspiration, motivation, and encouragement for civil servants to work professionally, remain service-oriented, and uphold organizational values. Furthermore, transformational leaders can foster a positive organizational culture that enables ASN to more effectively implement the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK in their daily work activities. These findings are consistent with transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes that leaders play a crucial role in shaping organizational behavior, attitudes, and culture (Hasanah et al., 2023). Effective leadership promotes the internalization of organizational values among employees, thereby creating a more disciplined, collaborative, and public service-oriented work environment (Maulana & Frinaldi, 2024).

#### 2) The Influence of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK on ASN Performance

The findings reveal a positive and significant effect of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK on ASN performance. This indicates that the stronger the implementation of BerAKHLAK values by employees, the better the performance of ASN at BKPSDM Tebing Tinggi City. The Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK serve as behavioral guidelines for civil servants in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. Principles such as being service-oriented, accountable, competent, harmonious, loyal, adaptive, and collaborative encourage employees to work more effectively, responsibly, and with greater organizational commitment. These findings demonstrate that the successful implementation of a positive organizational culture can enhance both service quality and employee productivity in government institutions. Civil servants who consistently practice the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK tend to exhibit stronger work ethics, which ultimately contributes to improved organizational performance (Nawendra, 2025).

#### 3) The Influence of Transformational Leadership on ASN Performance

The results demonstrate that transformational leadership has a positive effect on ASN performance. This finding suggests that improvements in transformational leadership practices are associated with higher levels of ASN performance. Transformational leadership motivates and inspires employees to perform more effectively in achieving organizational objectives. However, the influence of transformational leadership on ASN performance is not only direct but is also affected by other factors, such as organizational culture and the implementation of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK. Leaders who provide exemplary behavior, clear direction, and continuous motivation encourage civil servants to work with greater discipline, professionalism, and responsibility, thereby improving overall organizational performance (Fernando et al., 2025).

#### 4) The Mediating Role of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK in the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and ASN Performance

The findings indicate that the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK serve as a mediating variable in the relationship between transformational leadership and ASN performance. This result suggests that the implementation of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK acts as an important mechanism through which transformational leadership enhances employee performance. Transformational leadership exercised by organizational leaders contributes to the development of a positive organizational culture through the internalization of these core values. When such values are consistently practiced by civil servants, they promote

higher levels of work discipline, responsibility, professionalism, and public service quality, all of which contribute to improved ASN performance.

The findings further suggest that transformational leadership is more effective in enhancing ASN performance when it is supported by the successful implementation of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK within the organizational environment. Therefore, strengthening a work culture based on these values is a critical factor in improving the effectiveness of government organizations.

Based on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, this study involved civil servants with diverse educational backgrounds and varying lengths of service. These findings indicate that transformational leadership and the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK can be implemented comprehensively across employees regardless of their individual characteristics. Consequently, organizations should continue strengthening the organizational culture through employee development programs, supervision, and exemplary leadership practices to ensure the optimal improvement of ASN performance.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that transformational leadership has a positive effect on the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK at the Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency (BKPSDM) of Tebing Tinggi City. In addition, the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK have a positive and significant effect on ASN performance. The findings also demonstrate that transformational leadership positively influences ASN performance. Leaders who are able to provide motivation, inspiration, and exemplary work practices can encourage civil servants to work with greater discipline, professionalism, and responsibility. Furthermore, the results of the mediation analysis indicate that the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK are capable of mediating the relationship between transformational leadership and ASN performance. These findings suggest that the effective implementation and internalization of the Core Values of ASN BerAKHLAK within the organizational environment play an important role in strengthening the effectiveness of transformational leadership in improving ASN performance at the BKPSDM of Tebing Tinggi City.

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