

THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP AND COMPETENCE ON THE PERFORMANCE OF VILLAGE APPARATUS IN MALUKU PROVINCE: THE ROLE OF INNOVATION BEHAVIOR AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE AND WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AS A MODERATING VARIABLE

A INFLUÊNCIA DA LIDERANÇA E DA COMPETÊNCIA NO DESEMPENHO DOS ÓRGÃOS MUNICIPAIS NA PROVÍNCIA DE MALUKU: O PAPEL DO COMPORTAMENTO INOVADOR COMO VARIÁVEL MEDIADORA E DA ESPIRITUALIDADE NO LOCAL DE TRABALHO COMO VARIÁVEL MODERADORA

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Abstract

This study analyzes the influence of values-based leadership and competency on the performance of village officials in Maluku Province through the mediation of innovation behavior and moderation of workplace spirituality. Using a quantitative approach with the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-AMOS) method on 343 village official respondents from five regencies/cities in Maluku, this study found that values-based leadership did not directly influence official performance, but had a significant influence through the mediation of innovation behavior. Competence was shown to have both direct and indirect effects on performance through innovation behavior as a partial mediator. Innovation behavior is a key factor in transforming leadership capacity and competency into optimal performance. Workplace spirituality acts as a moderator, strengthening the relationship between values-based leadership and performance, but does not moderate the competence-performance relationship. These findings suggest that in the context of village government in an archipelago with strong local cultural characteristics,

Resumo

Este estudo analisa a influência da liderança baseada em valores e da competência no desempenho dos funcionários municipais da província de Maluku, por meio da mediação do comportamento inovador e da moderação da espiritualidade no local de trabalho. Utilizando uma abordagem quantitativa com o método de Modelagem de Equações Estruturais (SEM-AMOS) em 343 funcionários municipais de cinco regências/cidades em Maluku, este estudo constatou que a liderança baseada em valores não influenciou diretamente o desempenho dos funcionários, mas teve uma influência significativa por meio da mediação do comportamento inovador. A competência demonstrou ter efeitos tanto diretos quanto indiretos no desempenho por meio do comportamento inovador como mediador parcial. O comportamento inovador é um fator-chave na transformação da capacidade de liderança e da competência em desempenho ideal. A espiritualidade no local de trabalho atua como moderadora, fortalecendo a relação entre a liderança baseada em valores e o desempenho, mas não modera a relação entre



improving official performance requires a holistic approach that integrates the development of values-based leadership, strengthening technical competencies, stimulating innovative behavior, and fostering workplace spirituality as an integrated strategy to achieve effective and sustainable village governance.

Keywords: Value-Based Leadership. Civil Servant Competence. Innovation Behavior. Workplace Spirituality. Village Civil Servant Performance. Maluku Province.

competência e desempenho. Essas descobertas sugerem que, no contexto do governo municipal em um arquipélago com fortes características culturais locais, melhorar o desempenho dos funcionários requer uma abordagem holística que integre o desenvolvimento da liderança baseada em valores, o fortalecimento das competências técnicas, o estímulo ao comportamento inovador e a promoção da espiritualidade no local de trabalho como uma estratégia integrada para alcançar uma governança municipal eficaz e sustentável.

Palavras-chave: Liderança Baseada em Valores. Competência dos Servidores Públicos. Comportamento Inovador. Espiritualidade no Local de Trabalho. Desempenho dos Servidores Públicos Municipais. Província de Maluku.

1 INTRODUCTION

As a general system, an organization requires an understanding that each element within the system has specific roles and responsibilities. Therefore, a thorough human resource (HRM) planning process is essential to ensuring the organization has the number and quality of workforce that aligns with system needs. By analyzing performance, an organization can evaluate existing elements and identify areas for improvement, both at the individual and team levels. This aligns with the view that HR performance is a crucial indicator of an organization's progress. Otoo (2024) explains that one source of organizational excellence is high employee performance, which is naturally based on effective HR management. This contributes significantly to increasing organizational effectiveness and achieving strategic goals. In this context, the role of HR is crucial in aligning individual goals with organizational objectives.

As a key performance indicator, HR has also been studied by Mao *et al.* (2013), who showed that implementing a high-performance work system has a significant impact on improving performance and achieving organizational goals. To achieve these goals, organizations need to focus on employee development and management to create a productive and results-oriented work environment, including improving skills and motivation. Macke & Genari (2019) in their research on HR management practices showed that organizations should take the initiative in facilitating training that focuses on

improving skills to support organizational sustainability, including resource management, continuous innovation, and awareness of the work environment.

Universally, the concept of organizational performance is based on the idea that an organization is a collection of productive resources, including human, material, and capital, to achieve common goals. When people are conceptualized as productive resources, organizations that are able to improve their Human Resources management practices will achieve progress in learning and innovation (Para-González *et al.*, 2018). Research (Tensay & Singh, 2020) suggests that investing in human resources and building a robust HRM system will help organizations produce a workforce that makes significant contributions, which in turn will improve organizational performance.

The achievement of organizational goals is inseparable from individual performance in the context of public services, one of which is the performance of village government officials, the focus of this research. As state administrators and public servants, village government officials face increasingly complex challenges along with rapidly changing strategic environments. Rapid developments in science, technology, communication, and information also influence the orientation and performance of village government officials, who are expected to operate more professionally in carrying out their duties and functions. The goal of an effective government bureaucracy is to manage services and improve the quality of development for the community, so in this context, the village government apparatus functions as a tool to achieve this goal.

Furthermore, Law No. 6, 2014, serves as a crucial legal basis for the development and empowerment of village communities in Indonesia. This law recognizes the existence of villages and establishes a framework for village government officials, budget allocation, and community participation. Village official performance is measured through several aspects: quality of public services, community participation, village financial management, infrastructure development, community empowerment, innovation and creativity, and accountability to the community. All of these aspects aim to improve the quality of life and well-being of village communities.

Referring to the above description of village official performance, Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) mapped corruption cases that occurred in Indonesia in 2021. Based on ICW's findings, the village budget sector was the most frequently encountered corruption case in 2021, with 154 cases. As in previous years, this sector ranked highest

as the sector most frequently handled by law enforcement. The losses suffered by the state reached IDR 233,310,616,052 (233.3 billion) in 2021. Indonesia Corruption Watch also conducted case mapping based on the institutions involved in 2021.

The phenomenon of village head leadership in Maluku offers interesting insights into the dynamics of leadership at the local level. Unique challenges arise, such as cultural differences and customs. In the context of village life in Maluku, the culture and customs that require the selection of village heads from a particular clan are a compelling issue. This practice not only limits the choice of other figures with the potential and qualities to lead, but also creates social dynamics that can hinder village heads in managing village officials.

Given the complexity and potential obstacles in the direct influence pathways of leadership due to structural and situational factors such as selection based on descent and potential competency gaps among formal leaders in Maluku villages, a critical question arises: how does leadership (especially that based on fundamental values essential for effectiveness) actually influence the performance of village officials in this unique context, where the direct influence pathways are complex and uncertain? While mainstream leadership theories (as presented previously) assume a positive and direct influence, the contextual reality in Maluku strongly suggests the possibility of more complex or interdependent mechanisms of influence, not captured by simple linear models. In a setting characterized by structural challenges and competency gaps at the leadership level, it is possible that the quality of Value-Based Leadership of village leaders (a modern leadership perspective that emphasizes authenticity, values, and noble goals) does not directly affect the operational performance of apparatus, but rather through intermediaries (such as encouraging innovative behavior among apparatus who may be more adaptive to challenges) or its effectiveness depends on certain work environment conditions (such as the existence of a strong workplace spirituality as a foundation of shared values that transcends formal structures).

Therefore, this study focuses on an empirical analysis of the influence of Values-Based Leadership on Village Official Performance in Maluku Province, by investigating the role of Innovation Behavior as a mediating variable and Workplace Spirituality as a moderating variable. This approach was chosen specifically to fill the gap in understanding regarding the mechanisms of influence of Values-Based Leadership on

official performance in the uniquely challenging context of Maluku, where a direct pathway cannot be simply assumed. By exploring indirect pathways and moderating conditions, this study aims to provide a more accurate and nuanced picture of how values-based leadership, while perhaps not directly influential, can still contribute to the performance of village officials in this region.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Leadership

Leadership is a crucial aspect of every organization, whether in the public or private sector. Definitions of leadership vary, but generally refer to a person's ability to influence, motivate, and direct individuals or groups toward achieving specific goals. According to Grint, leadership is a social process involving interactions between leaders and followers within a specific context. In this context, leadership theories serve as a framework for understanding how leaders operate and how they can influence the behavior and performance of their followers. These theories have evolved over time, from classical approaches that focused more on the characteristics of individual leaders to modern approaches that take into account context and group dynamics.

Classical leadership theories, as described by Aminu (2017) and Steenkamp & Ziaei (2021), emphasize certain traits that a leader must possess, such as intelligence, personality, and communication skills. This approach often overlooks external and situational factors that can influence leadership effectiveness. Modern leadership theories, on the other hand, have begun to recognize the importance of context and group dynamics, as well as the emergence of values that can influence the behavior of both leaders and followers. This creates space for values-based leadership theory, which is increasingly relevant in today's business and organizational world.

Classical leadership theory is often considered the foundation of our understanding of leadership. This approach focuses on the individual characteristics of leaders and how these traits influence leadership effectiveness. According to Hisham (2019), this theory encompasses various models, including trait theory, behavioral theory,

and contingency theory. Each of these theories offers a different perspective on what makes a leader effective.

Trait theory, for example, argues that certain traits are inherent in individuals who become leaders. Research by Stogdill suggests that successful leaders tend to possess high intelligence, self-confidence, and strong communication skills. However, critics of this approach point out that not all successful leaders possess these traits, raising questions about the theory's broader relevance (Aminu, 2017).

Furthermore, behavioral theory focuses on the actions and behaviors exhibited by leaders. This model identifies two primary leadership styles: task-oriented leadership and relationship-oriented leadership. Research by the Ohio State University in the 1940s and 1950s revealed that leaders who balance these two orientations tend to be more effective in leading groups. However, this approach also has limitations, as it does not consider the situational context in which leadership takes place.

Over time, modern leadership theories have emerged in response to the limitations of classical theory. These theories began to recognize that leadership is not just about individuals, but also about relationships and interactions in a broader social context. stated that modern leadership focuses on collaboration, participation, and the development of mutually beneficial relationships between leaders and followers (Kamal *et al.*, 2025).

One of the most prominent approaches in modern leadership theory is transformational leadership. Transformational leaders are expected to inspire and motivate followers to achieve higher goals by creating a clear vision and building trust. Research by Bass, B.M., and Avolio shows that transformational leadership can improve individual and group performance and create a more positive work environment (Khan *et al.*, 2025).

However, in increasingly complex contexts, a values-based leadership approach has also emerged. This theory emphasizes the importance of values in shaping the behavior of leaders and followers. According to Chang *et al.* (2021), values-based leadership focuses on integrity, fairness, and social responsibility as the foundation for building strong relationships between leaders and followers. This approach is particularly relevant in the context of organizations committed to sustainability and social responsibility.

2.2 Competence

Competency theory has become a crucial pillar in human resource development across various sectors, including education and industry. This concept was first popularized by McClelland, who emphasized that an individual's ability to perform a specific task is more important than educational background or work experience (Chouhan & Srivastava, 2014). In this context, competency is defined as the combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to achieve optimal performance in a specific job. Over time, this theory has evolved and been adapted by various disciplines, including psychology, management, and education (Makulova *et al.*, 2015).

One of the significant contributions of competency theory is its ability to bridge the gap between theory and practice. In an increasingly complex and dynamic workplace, organizations require individuals who possess not only theoretical knowledge but also relevant practical skills. According to Wong (2020), competency can be measured and developed through various methods, including training, career development, and performance appraisals. This demonstrates that competency is not a fixed trait, but rather a quality that can be improved over time.

In an effort to understand competency as a fundamental aspect of individual and organizational development, the competency theory proposed by Spencer *et al.*, 2009a, provides a comprehensive roadmap. In the book, "Toward a Unified Theory of Development," the authors propose that competency consists of a combination of knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to achieve desired outcomes in a given context. This theory not only emphasizes the importance of these elements individually but also encompasses the interaction and integration between them, which contribute to an individual's overall effectiveness in performing tasks (Damaševičius & Sidekerskienė, 2024).

One important contribution of this model is its emphasis on identifying competencies relevant to specific contexts and objectives. Spencer *et al.* argue that competencies must be understood within a specific framework that takes into account environmental conditions and organizational goals. This suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach cannot be applied to all. Competencies should be developed with the unique

needs of each organization or situation in mind, enabling individuals to apply their knowledge and skills most effectively (Kulkov *et al.*, 2024).

2.3 Innovation behavior

The concept of innovation behavior theory developed in the current research design direction adopts the concept proposed by Janssen, where the emergence of the concept of innovative behavior is based on the person-environment theory of Edwards. Person-environment theory is an important framework that explains how individuals adjust their behavior and well-being in response to demands from their work environment (Al Essa & Durugbo, 2022). In the context of innovation, this theory provides insight into how individuals are not only influenced by external demands but also how they adapt by developing new behaviors to address these challenges. Janssen, in his research, highlighted how increasing job demands can create stress but also open up opportunities for employees to engage in innovative work behavior (IWB) as a productive response to these pressures.

In his research, Janssen developed the concept that innovative behavior emerges from the interaction between individuals and their work environment, where high job demands can encourage employees to think creatively and generate new ideas to address problems. This aligns with the basic tenets of person-environment theory, which argues that environmental conditions, including social pressure and support, significantly contribute to an individual's response to stress and challenges. In this sense, innovation behavior can be viewed as an adaptive strategy that employees use to navigate the demands of the workplace, creating an architecture that allows innovation to emerge as a result of the need to adapt (George, 2022).

The innovation process, as explained by Janssen, is not linear but rather complex and multidimensional, involving the generation, promotion, and realization of ideas. Person-environment theory supports this understanding by demonstrating that innovative actions often result from a dynamic interaction between individuals and their work context (Phanniphong *et al.*, 2024). Employees who have greater control over their work and feel that their innovation is valued are more likely to be active in innovating. Therefore, efforts to create a work environment that supports increased individual control

and adequate rewards can increase the potential for innovation within an organization (Deng *et al.*, 2022).

Overall, the connection between person-environment theory and the concept of innovation behavior in Janssen's research highlights that innovation is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather the result of a complex interaction between individuals and the demands and supports of their surrounding environment. By developing a framework that highlights the importance of balancing demands and rewards, and by considering the dynamic nature of this interaction, we can gain deeper insights into how organizations can facilitate innovation. This is particularly important in the design of policies and organizational structures aimed at fostering creativity and innovation in the workplace, making innovation an integral part of an organization's strategy to adapt and thrive in the face of change (Rabetino *et al.*, 2025).

2.4 Workplace spirituality

Workplace spirituality is defined as a process involving individuals, companies, and the interaction between the two. Employees seek purpose in their work, build strong relationships with coworkers, and strive to align their personal beliefs with organizational values (Afsar & Rehman, 2015). In examining the concept of workplace spirituality, it is important to understand how the thoughts of leading philosophers and psychologists, such as Kant; Maslow & Lewis; Seligman, can be integrated with research conducted by Ashmos, D.P., & Duchon. Each of these authors has made significant contributions to understanding how the search for meaning and purpose in the workplace can impact individual well-being and organizational effectiveness.

Kant provides an important philosophical foundation for morality and motivation through his transcendental thinking. Kant encourages individuals to transcend self-interest and focus on universal values accessible through reason. In the context of workplace spirituality, Kant's thinking can be interpreted as encouraging employees to find deeper meaning in their work, one that serves not only to fulfill personal needs but also to contribute to a larger collective purpose. In this way, the search for higher moral values can result in a more ethical work environment that is responsive to the needs of all its members (Jasinenko & Steuber, 2023).

Furthermore, Maslow & Lewis developed a hierarchy of needs theory that places self-actualization at the top of the human needs pyramid. This theory emphasizes that to achieve higher levels of satisfaction, individuals must first fulfill their basic needs, from physiological needs to safety and social interaction. This aligns with the findings of Ashmos and Duchon, who demonstrated that workplace spirituality enables individuals to find meaning and purpose in their work. When employees can fulfill these basic needs, they are more likely to engage in a search for meaning and achieve self-actualization in a professional context, thereby enhancing their performance and job satisfaction (Maunz & Glaser, 2023).

Seligman, a pioneer of positive psychology, added a new dimension to thinking about human well-being with his focus on meaning and purpose. Seligman's theory of happiness includes elements such as engagement, meaningful relationships, and the search for meaning, all of which demonstrate close relevance to the principles of spirituality expressed by Ashmos and Duchon. In an organizational context, Seligman demonstrated that when individuals feel connected to something larger, whether through the organization's mission or interpersonal relationships, their levels of happiness and productivity tend to increase. This concept reflects Ashmos and Duchon's view that spirituality plays a vital role in a more satisfying work experience (Pande & Pande, 2024).

The integration of these three schools of thought provides deeper insights into how individuals can find meaning and purpose in their work. Kant emphasized the importance of moral and ethical values, Maslow focused on achieving self-actualization, and Seligman explored the components of happiness through the search for meaning. These three perspectives play a role in creating a positive organizational culture, where workplace spirituality becomes an integral part of the work experience. Therefore, a multidimensional approach that combines these concepts can help formulate strategies to improve employee well-being and organizational effectiveness (Essien *et al.*, 2024).

Finally, linking the theories of Kant, Maslow, and Seligman with the research of Ashmos and Duchon provides a comprehensive framework for understanding workplace spirituality. These theories emphasize the importance of meaning, purpose, and deep relationships in creating a work environment that supports individual well-being. Therefore, implementing these concepts in organizational practice not only fosters productivity and success but also contributes to greater employee self-development and

satisfaction. Through this holistic understanding, this study aims to make a meaningful contribution to the literature on workplace spirituality (Narenji Thani *et al.*, 2022).

3 METHOD

This study uses explanatory research. Explanatory research aims to explain the causal relationship between variables and test previously formulated hypotheses. The approach used in this study is quantitative, namely an approach that relies on data in the form of numbers, starting from the process of data collection, analysis, to interpretation. The unit of analysis in this study is individual village officials in Maluku Province. This study focused on a population of 1,248 villages with 8,736 village officials in Maluku Province consisting of nine regencies and two cities. In this study, the validity test used is the construct validity test which shows how well the results obtained from the use of measures match the theory underlying the test design (Sekaran, 2011). It is said to be valid if significant (α) <5% or <0.05 question indicators will be declared valid from the IBM SPSS Statistics output display in the correlation table by looking at sig. (2-tailed). Instrument validity testing was processed using the IBM SPSS Statistics 21 software program. In research, data quality testing that is often carried out is the reliability test for internal consistency reliability, where this concept emphasizes the consistency of the question items in an instrument. Question indicators are said to be reliable if the Cronbach alpha value is > 0.6 (Sekaran, 2011). Reliability testing was processed using the IBM SPSS software program. In this study, researchers applied the SEM – AMOS approach (Haryono & Wardoyo, 2012), to test the proposed hypothesis, which is an important step in understanding the complex dynamics between various variables. SEM – AMOS, or Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS software, is a structural equation modeling method that allows researchers to build and test complex causal models between latent variables. By using SEM – AMOS, researchers can simultaneously test various hypotheses, which not only helps in validating existing theories but also provides a deeper understanding of the relationships between variables that may not be visible through other analysis methods.

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Model Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The initial step before testing the full model in SEM is to analyze the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model. This step is commonly referred to as the two-step approach. The purpose of CFA model analysis is to determine the validity and reliability of the construct. If the CFA results find an item with a low loading factor, i.e., a value less than 0.50, it will be removed from the model.

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model can be used to examine the unidimensionality of variables. Unidimensionality is a requirement for reliability and construct validity analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis models have been shown to have a variance-covariance matrix from the model estimates that is consistent with the variance-covariance matrix from the sample if the probability value is greater than 0.05. Another criterion used to measure model suitability is the goodness of fit index (GFI). The minimum expected value for the GFI is 0.90 (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, a GFI calculation greater than 0.90 indicates that the item has acceptable reliability. This CFA model will present some initial identification results, such as checking for outliers and multinormal distributions.

The model fit results in the initial CFA model, chi square = 298.858, GFI = 0.929, AGFI = 0.907, CFI = 0.967, TLI = 0.960, RMSEA = 0.048 and NFI = 0.931. Overall model fit from various model fit indices explains the existence of a high model fit. In this CFA model, all items have a loading factor of more than 0.50. The results of GFI and AGFI are worth more than 90, RMSEA less than 0.08 is an indication of good absolute fit. While CFI and TLI are worth more than 0.95, NFI is worth more than 0.90 explains the existence of a good incremental fit. Good fit model is found in all model fit indices, namely GFI, AGFI, CFI, TLI, RMSEA and NFI.

4.2 Evaluation of outliers and multivariate normal distribution

Univariate outliers can be checked by determining the threshold value for outliers by converting the research data into a standard score, commonly known as a z-score. For

large samples (over 80 samples), univariate outliers are evaluated if the z-score falls outside the range of -4 to 4. Based on the assumption that observations with a z-score ≥ 4.00 are categorized as outliers, the data used in this study do not contain univariate outliers. Furthermore, to determine the location of outlier observations, the results of the multivariate outlier test will be displayed. To detect multivariate outliers, the Mahalanobis distance was used, which can be found in the analysis output using AMOS 20. The analysis revealed 39 observations as multivariate outliers, having a $p1$ value > 0.01 , resulting in a total of 343 observations analyzed.

The multivariate data distribution must be analyzed to determine whether the assumption of a multivariate normal distribution is met so that the data can be further processed for SEM modeling. This test is performed by examining the multivariate kurtosis value. The multivariate normal distribution test indicates that the C.R. calculation falls between -2.58 and 2.58. This analysis yielded a C.R. value of 38.680, indicating that the assumption of a multivariate normal distribution is not met. Failure to meet this assumption requires a change in the estimation technique used. For data with a multivariate normal distribution, parameter estimation can be performed using maximum likelihood (ML). Because the results of the distribution examination do not meet the requirements of multinormal distribution, the model testing will be carried out using Bollen-Stine bootstrap, namely by first changing the analysis properties settings in the output section by activating the perform bootstrap and Bollen-Stine bootstrap options.

4.3 Measurement model

The measurement model will explain the validity and reliability of the constructs within the four variables in the hypothetical model. Construct validity and reliability are explained by the magnitude of the loading factor, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). The measurement model in the hypothetical model has good validity and reliability. Factor loadings in the range of 0.525–0.915 are good because they are greater than 0.50. The reliability of each construct is also good; composite reliability values in the range of 0.841–0.924 exceed the recommended limit of 0.70. Similarly, construct reliability, as measured by AVE values, is in the range of 0.515–0.753,

exceeding the recommended limit of 0.50. Each main descriptive construct is represented by the item with the highest factor loading.

Based on the research results, all constructs in the research model meet the validity and reliability criteria required in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. In terms of reliability, all constructs showed very good Composite Reliability values, where Apparatus Performance had the highest reliability of 0.924, followed by Workplace Spirituality (0.868), Competence (0.864), Innovation Behavior (0.855), and Leadership (0.841), all of which were above the minimum threshold of 0.70. Convergent validity measured through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) also showed satisfactory results for four constructs with values above 0.50, namely Apparatus Performance (0.753), Innovation Behavior (0.664), Competence (0.623), and Workplace Spirituality (0.623), while the Leadership construct showed an AVE of 0.515 which was still acceptable because it was close to the threshold of 0.50. The loading factors of all indicators show varying strengths, with the strongest indicators being Y23 (0.915) for Apparatus Performance and X24 (0.909) for Competence, while the weakest but still significant indicators are X21 (0.525) for Competence and X14 (0.677) for Leadership. Overall, these results confirm that the measurement model has solid psychometric qualities and is reliable for further structural analysis.

Table 1

Discriminant Validity

	X1	X2	X3	Y1	Y2
Leadership (X1)	0.72				
Competence (X2)	0.19	0.79			
Workplace Spirituality (X3)	0.05	0.34	0.79		
Innovation Behavior (Y1)	0.26	0.65	0.33	0.82	
Apparatus performance (Y2)	0.25	0.60	0.33	0.76	0.87

In addition to meeting convergent validity, a reflective measurement model must have discriminant validity. A measurement model meets discriminant validity if the AVE root of a construct is greater than the correlation coefficient with other constructs. For example, the leadership construct (X1) has an AVE value of 0.515, resulting in an AVE root of 0.72. The correlation coefficient of the leadership construct (X1) with other constructs ranges from 0.05 to 0.26, this analysis concludes that there is quite good

discriminant validity. Table 1 explains all the results of discriminant validity. The results show that the discriminant validity value of a variable is higher than the correlation value between variables. Thus, it can be concluded that the measurement model of this study has met discriminant validity.

Then the results of the path coefficient test found that the research model was able to explain substantial variations in endogenous variables with an R^2 of 43.1% for Innovation Behavior and 57.8% for Apparatus Performance. In relation to Innovation Behavior, Competence ($\beta=0.638$; $p<0.001$) showed a much stronger influence than Leadership ($\beta=0.157$; $p<0.003$), indicating that apparatus capability is a dominant factor in encouraging innovative behavior. For the variable of Apparatus Performance, an interesting finding is that Leadership does not have a significant direct effect ($\beta=0.051$; $p=0.263$) which means that Public sector Organizations have structural clarity that limits the ability of leaders to influence performance directly, such as strict Regulations, while Innovation Behavior shows the strongest effect ($\beta=0.604$; $p<0.001$), followed by Competence ($\beta=0.178$; $p=0.005$) and Workspace Spirituality ($\beta=0.128$; $p=0.004$). The moderating effect of Workspace Spirituality shows different results, where the interaction with Leadership (MX1) has a significant effect ($\beta=0.104$; $p=0.010$), indicating that workplace spirituality strengthens the influence of leadership on performance, but the interaction with Competence (MX2) is not significant ($\beta=0.068$; $p=0.090$). These findings confirm that in the context of village officials in Maluku, the influence of leadership on performance is more effective when supported by a strong workplace spiritual climate, while competence has a relatively stable influence regardless of the level of workplace spirituality, and innovation behavior plays a role as an important mediator linking competence with village official performance.

4.4 Hypothesis testing

There are nine hypotheses in this study. The following is an explanation of each hypothesis.

- a. Hypothesis H1 states that leadership has a positive effect on village apparatus performance. Hypothesis testing is performed by comparing the p-value with a significance level ($\alpha = 5\%$). The hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is less than

0.050. The analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.051 ($p = 0.263$) with a p-value greater than 0.05, thus rejecting the hypothesis. This means that leadership (X1) has no significant effect on village apparatus performance (Y2). Good leadership (X1) does not always improve village apparatus performance. This could also be due to the presence of other variables that are more dominant or leadership alone is not sufficient to improve performance (Y2). Therefore, hypothesis H1 is not supported;

- b. Hypothesis H2 states that competence has a positive effect on village apparatus performance. Hypothesis testing is performed by comparing the p-value with a significance level ($\alpha = 5\%$). The hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is less than 0.050. The analysis results obtained a coefficient of 0.178 ($p = 0.005$) with a p value smaller than 0.05, so the hypothesis is accepted. This means that competence (X2) has a significant effect on the performance of village officials (Y2). Good competence (X2) will improve the performance of village officials (Y2), so the H2 hypothesis is supported;
- c. Hypothesis H3 states that leadership has a positive effect on the innovative behavior of village officials. Hypothesis testing is performed by comparing the p-value with a significance level ($\alpha = 5\%$). The hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is less than 0.050. The analysis results obtained a coefficient of 0.157 ($p = 0.003$) with a p-value less than 0.05, thus the hypothesis is accepted. This means that leadership (X1) has a significant effect on the innovative behavior of village officials (Y1). Good leadership (X1) will increase the innovative behavior of village officials (Y1), thus supporting hypothesis H3;
- d. Hypothesis H4 states that competence has a positive effect on the innovative behavior of village officials. Hypothesis testing is performed by comparing the p-value with a significance level ($\alpha = 5\%$). The hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is less than 0.050. The analysis results obtained a coefficient of 0.638 ($p < 0.001$) with a p-value less than 0.05, thus the hypothesis is accepted. This means that competency (X2) significantly influences the innovative behavior of village officials (Y1). Good competency (X2) will increase the innovative behavior of village officials (Y1), thus supporting hypothesis H4;

- e. Hypothesis H5 states that innovative behavior has a positive effect on the performance of village officials. Hypothesis testing was conducted by comparing the p-value with a significance level ($\alpha = 5\%$). The hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is less than 0.050. The analysis results obtained a coefficient of 0.604 ($p < 0.001$) with a p-value less than 0.05, thus accepting the hypothesis. This means that innovative behavior (Y1) significantly influences the performance of village officials (Y2). Good innovative behavior (Y1) will improve the performance of village officials (Y2), thus supporting hypothesis H5;
- f. Hypothesis H6 states that leadership influences civil servant performance through innovative behavior. Data analysis revealed a path coefficient of 0.095 ($p=0.005$) for the indirect influence of leadership (X1) on civil servant performance (Y2) through innovative behavior (Y1), indicating that innovative behavior (Y1) is a mediating variable.

The analysis showed that the direct effect of leadership (X1) on civil servant performance (Y2) was insignificant ($b = 0.051$; $p = 0.263$). Both leadership (X1) on innovative behavior (Y1) with a coefficient of 0.157 ($p = 0.003$) and innovative behavior (Y1) on civil servant performance (Y2) with a coefficient of 0.604 ($p < 0.001$) were significant. Therefore, innovative behavior (Y1) mediates the effect of leadership (X1) on civil servant performance (Y2), which is accepted as partial mediation.

- g. Hypothesis H7 states that competence influences civil servant performance through innovation behavior. Data analysis revealed a path coefficient of 0.385 ($p<0.001$) for the indirect effect of competence (X2) on civil servant performance (Y2) through innovation behavior (Y1), indicating that innovation behavior (Y1) is a mediating variable.

The analysis showed a significant direct effect of competence (X2) on civil servant performance (Y2) ($b = 0.178$; $p = 0.005$). Both competence (X2) and innovation behavior (Y1) on civil servant performance (Y2) were found to be significant, with a coefficient of 0.638 ($p<0.001$) and innovation behavior (Y1) and civil servant performance (Y2) of 0.604 ($p<0.001$). Thus, because the indirect influence through innovation behavior (Y1) was tested as significant and the direct influence of competence (X2) on apparatus performance (Y2) also remained significant, innovation behavior (Y1) was accepted as partial mediation.

h. Hypothesis H8 states that workplace spirituality can strengthen the relationship between leadership and its influence on village apparatus performance. The results of data analysis obtained a path coefficient of the influence of the interaction between leadership and workplace spirituality ($X1*M$) on apparatus performance ($Y2$) of 0.104 ($p=0.010$). These results indicate that workplace spirituality ($X3$) is a moderating variable in the influence of leadership ($X1$) on employee performance ($Y2$). This means that when workplace spirituality is high, leadership can have a stronger impact on performance. This indicates a moderating effect, where workplace spirituality can increase leadership effectiveness in driving performance.

Further examination was conducted to determine whether workplace spirituality ($X3$) is a pure moderation or a quasi-moderation. This examination was based on the results of the direct effect test of workplace spirituality ($X3$) on employee performance ($Y2$). The analysis results showed a significant direct effect of workplace spirituality ($X3$) on employee performance ($Y2$) ($b = 0.128$; $p = 0.004$). Thus, workplace spirituality ($X3$) is a quasi-moderation.

i. Hypothesis H9 states that workplace spirituality can strengthen the relationship between competencies and their influence on village apparatus performance. Data analysis revealed a path coefficient of the interaction effect between competency and workplace spirituality ($X2*M$) on apparatus performance ($Y2$) of 0.068 ($p=0.090$). This result indicates that workplace spirituality ($X3$) does not act as a moderating variable in the influence of competency ($X2$) on apparatus performance ($Y2$).

The analysis shows that workplace spirituality ($X3$) does not function as a moderator in the relationship between competency ($X1$) and apparatus performance ($Y2$). This is evident from the insignificant interaction coefficient of $X2*M$, which neither strengthens nor weakens the influence of competency ($X2$) on performance ($Y2$). This indicates that an apparatus with good technical knowledge, adequate managerial skills, and a high level of professionalism will feel confident that their efforts will result in effective performance.

Table 2*Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results*

No	Hypothesis	Coefficient	P-value	Results	Information
H1	Leadership (X1) → Village Apparatus Performance (Y2)	0.051	0.263	Not Significant	Hypothesis not supported
H2	Competence (X2) → Village Apparatus Performance (Y2)	0.178	0.005	Significant	Hypothesis supported
H3	Leadership (X1) → Innovation Behavior (Y1)	0.157	0.003	Significant	Hypothesis supported
H4	Competence (X2) → Innovation Behavior (Y1)	0.638	< 0.001	Significant	Hypothesis supported
H5	Innovation Behavior (Y1) → Village Apparatus Performance (Y2)	0.604	< 0.001	Significant	Hypothesis supported
H6	Leadership (X1) → Apparatus Performance (Y2) through Innovation Behavior (Y1)	0.095	0.005	Significant	Partial mediation
H7	Competence (X2) → Apparatus Performance (Y2) through Innovation Behavior (Y1)	0.385	< 0.001	Significant	Partial mediation
H8	Workplace Spirituality (X3) moderates Leadership (X1) → Apparatus Performance (Y2)	0.104	0.010	Significant	Quacy Moderation
H9	Workplace Spirituality (X3) moderates Competence (X2) → Apparatus Performance (Y2)	0.068	0.090	Not Significant	Hypothesis not supported

4.5 The influence of leadership on village apparatus performance

Test results indicate that leadership has a positive but insignificant direct influence on the performance of village officials in Maluku Province. To understand this phenomenon more deeply, Kerr & Jermier explain that under certain conditions, other factors can replace or neutralize the function of traditional leadership. Within this theoretical framework, substitutes refer to factors that make leadership unnecessary because the needs typically met by the leader are already met by other sources.

The application of this concept to the context of village officials in Maluku Province shows that the dominant characteristics of routine administrative activities act as strong substitutes for directive leadership. Village officials' tasks, such as issuing ID cards, managing village funds, and preparing financial reports, have highly standardized and clear procedures. For example, in managing Village Fund Allocations, according to Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 20 of 2018, officials follow rigid stages from planning, implementation, and reporting, with established formats and timelines. This

procedural clarity reduces the need for direct direction from the village head because officials already understand what to do and how to do it.

4.6 The influence of competence on village apparatus performance

The test results indicate that competency has a direct, positive, and significant impact on the performance of village officials in Maluku Province. This finding suggests that, in the context of this study, the higher the level of competency possessed by village officials, the better their performance in carrying out village government duties. However, organizations must continuously invest in the development of apparatus competencies. If competencies are not continuously improved in line with the growing complexity of tasks and community demands, there is a risk that apparatus performance will decline in the future.

Village officials in Maluku stated that their competency is a key factor in carrying out village government duties effectively. Furthermore, they revealed that investing in competency development through formal education and ongoing training significantly improves the quality of their work. This support includes improving their understanding of the latest regulations, developing technical skills in the use of technology, and enhancing communication and coordination skills. Village officials explained that with adequate competency, they can complete complex tasks such as preparing village development plans, managing budgets, and coordinating community empowerment programs more effectively and efficiently.

4.7 The influence of leadership on the innovation behavior of village apparatus

The research results show that Values-Based Leadership has a positive effect on the innovative behavior of village officials in Maluku Province, with a strong significance level. This finding illustrates the crucial role of a village head in stimulating the emergence of new ideas, encouraging creative solutions, and fostering the courage of village officials to try different approaches in carrying out their duties (Purnomo & Ausat, 2024).

To understand these empirical findings, the Person-Environment Fit Theory developed by Edwards provides a relevant framework for explaining why values-based leadership has a significant influence on the innovative behavior of village officials in Maluku Province. This theory states that individual behavior, attitudes, and performance are the result of a match between personal characteristics and the characteristics of the work environment. In the Maluku context, where traditional customs and local cultural values, such as the *pela gandong* system, are still highly respected, village officials have a unique individual profile. They not only master technical competencies in government administration but are also required to possess a deep understanding of the social and cultural dynamics of the local community. Therefore, value-based leadership implemented by village heads in Maluku needs to be able to accommodate these characteristics, by making local values an integral part of the work environment that supports the emergence of innovative behavior.

4.8 The influence of competence on innovation behavior

This research shows that competence has a significant positive effect on the innovative behavior of village officials in Maluku Province. This finding indicates that increasing village officials' competence is directly proportional to their ability to generate ideas, promote them, and implement them.

Furthermore, to understand the theoretical mechanism of this influence, it can be examined through the lens of Competency Theory or Competence-based Approach developed by McClelland regarding the integrated capabilities of an individual. This theory emphasizes that the actual ability to perform specific tasks is an integrated combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavioral characteristics.

In the context of village officials in Maluku, knowledge includes a deep understanding of village regulations, specific local issues such as marine resource management, customary traditions that influence village administration, and administrative procedures adapted to island conditions. Skills refer to the practical ability to manage administration with limited infrastructure, use digital tools in conditions of unstable connectivity, or resolve conflicts involving customary values. Meanwhile, attitudes and behavioral characteristics include proactive traits in facing the geographical

challenges of the archipelago, adaptive to policy changes, collaborative with various stakeholders including traditional leaders, and having a high service ethos in the context of Maluku's mutual cooperation culture.

4.9 The influence of innovation behavior on village apparatus performance

Test results confirm that innovative behavior has a significant positive effect on village official performance in Maluku Province. This finding provides strong empirical confirmation of the vital role of innovative behavior in improving village official performance, particularly in the context of Maluku Province, with all its geographic, infrastructural, and socio-cultural complexities. In practice, this is evident in how village officials who actively develop and implement innovations demonstrate superior performance compared to those who merely adhere to conventional work routines.

For example, in South Buru Regency, villages with natural resources and village officials were able to collaborate with the district government's university to digitize clove product development in various types and sizes. This not only increased the program's effectiveness but also demonstrated significant improvements in various performance indicators, such as responsiveness to community needs (Basuki & Noya, 2023). Similarly, in the Central Maluku Islands Regency, village officials who initiated an environmentally friendly fishing system, the sero system, which draws on local cultural wisdom, demonstrated superior performance in overall village development.

4.10 Leadership influences civil servant performance through innovative behavior

The research results show that Values-Based Leadership significantly influences Village Official Performance through Innovation Behavior, which acts as a mediating variable in the relationship. This means that village heads who practice leadership values such as integrity, caring, and exemplary behavior do not necessarily improve official performance directly, but rather through creating a work climate that encourages innovation.

In practice, this is reflected in Ursana Village, West Seram Regency, where the village head encouraged officials to collaborate with universities to develop locally

processed products. The result was an innovation in the processing of roa fish into a ready-to-eat chili sauce, which is now successfully marketed at Indomaret and various other outlets. This innovation not only increases the village's economic value but also demonstrates improved official performance in terms of cross-sector collaboration, creativity in developing local potential, and managerial skills in supporting product marketing.

4.11 Competence influences civil servant performance through innovation behavior

Research results indicate that competence influences village official performance through innovative behavior. To understand this complex mediating mechanism, it can be explained through two main theories that complement and reinforce each other. First, Social Cognitive Theory, developed by Bandura, provides a framework for understanding how individual competence influences innovative behavior. Elsayed *et al.* (2023) argue that social cognitive theory explains that human behavior is the result of a dynamic reciprocal interaction between personal factors such as cognition and emotion, environmental factors, and the behavior itself within a reciprocal determinism model. Furthermore, Basileo *et al.* (2024) states that one of the key concepts in this theory is self-efficacy, which is a person's belief in their ability to successfully perform a specific task and achieve desired outcomes. In the context of this research, possessing adequate competence directly increases the self-efficacy of village officials in facing the various challenges of their duties and responsibilities.

In the specific context of Maluku, officials who feel competent and possess knowledge of village regulations, technological skills, data analysis capabilities, and relevant proactive attitudes will be more confident in facing the challenges typical of the archipelago (Masidonda & Hariyanti, 2019). This confidence in their abilities encourages them to take initiatives and demonstrate innovative behavior, even amidst limited resources and less-than-ideal conditions. This is evident in Ambon City, where village officials, with an understanding of the geographical potential and basic knowledge of aerospace sports, took advantage of the village's location with stable winds and favorable natural contours to develop paragliding activities as a new tourist attraction. By partnering

with sports communities and tourism actors, they successfully made paragliding part of the village's tourism promotion, attracting both local and out-of-town visitors.

4.12 The role of workplace spiritual moderation on the influence of leadership and performance of village apparatus in Maluku

The results of this study demonstrate the moderating role of Workplace Spirituality in influencing the strength of the relationship between Values-Based Leadership and Village Official Performance, proven valid and significant with a high level of confidence. This finding indicates that Workplace Spirituality plays a role in substantially strengthening the positive relationship between Values-Based Leadership and Village Official Performance. In other words, the stronger the Workplace Spirituality within the village government environment, the stronger the positive influence of Values-Based Leadership on Village Official Performance in carrying out their daily tasks.

The theoretical basis for this strengthening effect can be understood through the convergence of three pillars of philosophical and psychological thought, which collectively form the theoretical foundation of workplace spirituality in the context of organizational behavior. First, the Philosophy of Universal Values developed by Kant provides a foundation for understanding that work can and should be seen as a noble task carried out with full integrity and high moral responsibility, not merely for material rewards or personal gain. Saran *et al.* (2023) explain that this philosophical perspective emphasizes that every action in work must be based on consideration of the universal values of goodness and truth. In the context of village officials in Maluku, this means that every service task to the community, from processing administrative documents to implementing development programs, is seen as a sacred and meaningful moral mandate, not merely a bureaucratic routine.

4.13 The role of workplace spiritual moderation on the influence of competence and performance of village apparatus in Maluku

The results of this study indicate that workplace spirituality does not mediate the effect of competence on performance. To understand why these two factors do not

reinforce each other, two theoretical explanations can help us understand how competence and workplace spirituality operate separately in influencing employee performance. The first explanation uses the Expectancy Theory developed by Vroom and Porter. This theory provides a useful perspective for understanding why the two factors do not interact significantly (Permzadian & Shen, 2024). Expectancy Theory explains that a person's motivation to work is formed from three important, interrelated elements. The first is expectancy, which is how confident a person is that their efforts will result in good performance. The second is instrumentality, which is the belief that good performance will bring a reward or desired outcome. The third is valence, which is the value or importance a person places on that reward or outcome. These three elements work together to determine how motivated a person is to perform well.

In this study, competence has a strong relationship with the expectancy element in the theory. Civil servants with strong technical knowledge, adequate managerial skills, and a strong professional attitude will feel confident that their efforts will result in effective performance (Guerrero *et al.*, 2024). They believe in their abilities because they possess the knowledge and skills needed to complete tasks effectively. In Maluku, this can be seen in civil servants with information technology skills who feel confident in completing village data digitization projects successfully. Similarly, civil servants with financial management skills feel confident in preparing precise and accurate financial reports. This confidence arises regardless of whether their work environment has high spiritual values or not (Syahir *et al.*, 2025). Conversely, Workplace Spirituality is more related to the element of valence, namely meaning and value. Civil servants who work in a spiritual environment will view their work as meaningful and valuable. They consider their work important because it can serve the community and make a real contribution to the common good (Nöhammer, 2022). For them, work is not just about completing tasks, but also about providing meaningful services to the community.

5 CONCLUSION

This study shows that leadership has a positive but insignificant direct effect on the performance of village officials in Maluku Province due to the existence of substitutes for leadership such as formal bureaucratic structures, standardized work procedures, and

the characteristics of routine administrative tasks that enable officials to maintain performance through procedural clarity. Conversely, competence is proven to have a positive and significant effect on performance, because the combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and adaptability allows officials to remain productive and produce quality performance despite facing infrastructure limitations and the geographical challenges of the archipelago. Value-based leadership also has a positive and significant effect on innovation behavior, because the practice of authenticity, altruism, and exemplary behavior from the village head creates a safe psychological environment that encourages officials to generate and implement creative ideas that are appropriate to local conditions and Maluku cultural values. Competence also strengthens innovation behavior by increasing self-confidence, intrinsic motivation, and the ability of officials to identify problems and design contextual solutions. Furthermore, innovation behavior has a positive and significant effect on the performance of village officials, because innovation allows for the optimization of limited resources, overcomes geographical barriers, and improves the quality of public services and community participation. Value-based leadership improves apparatus performance indirectly through innovation behavior as a mediator, by providing psychological resources that trigger innovation and better performance, while competence also influences performance through innovation, with the greatest impact occurring when apparatus capabilities are utilized to produce effective innovation. In addition, workplace spirituality strengthens the relationship between value-based leadership and apparatus performance because the alignment of values, work meaning, and self-actualization creates a synergy that supports optimal performance; however, workplace spirituality does not significantly moderate the effect of competence on performance because competence and spirituality work through different pathways—competence is technical-instrumental, while spirituality is related to the meaning and value of work—so both contribute independently to improving village apparatus performance.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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