

HOLISTIC EDUCATION, SCHOOL CULTURE, AND WORK MOTIVATION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TEACHERS IN SOUTH KALIMANTAN

^{*1}Citra Hapsari, ²Aslamiah, ³Ahmad Suriansyah

^{*1,2,3}Universitas Lambung Mangkurat

Email: ^{*1}cit.hapsari@gmail.com, ²aslamiah@ulm.ac.id, ³a.suriansyah@ulm.ac.id

Abstract

This study examined the effects of holistic education and school culture on the performance of early childhood education (ECE) teachers, with work motivation as a mediating variable, in ECE institutions participating in the Holistic Character-Based Education (PHBK) program in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. A quantitative explanatory design was employed involving 113 ECE teachers from 16 core and Level 5 Developing ECE institutions across eight regencies/cities. Data were collected using five-point Likert-scale questionnaires measuring holistic education, school culture, work motivation, and teacher performance. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and path analysis, with the Sobel test used to examine mediation effects. The findings demonstrated that holistic education significantly predicted work motivation ($\beta = 0.653$, $p < .001$) and teacher performance ($\beta = 0.201$, $p = .006$). School culture significantly predicted work motivation ($\beta = 0.753$, $p < .001$) and teacher performance ($\beta = 0.164$, $p = .047$). Work motivation significantly predicted teacher performance ($\beta = 0.591$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, work motivation significantly mediated the effects of holistic education and school culture on teacher performance, with indirect effects of 0.386 and 0.445, respectively. The model explained 76.7% of the variance in teacher performance. These findings highlight the importance of integrating value-based professional development, supportive school cultures, and intrinsic work motivation to strengthen sustainable teacher performance in ECE.

Keywords: holistic education, school culture, work motivation, teacher performance, early childhood education, mediation analysis

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh pendidikan holistik dan budaya sekolah terhadap kinerja guru pendidikan anak usia dini (PAUD), dengan motivasi kerja sebagai variabel perantara, di lembaga-lembaga PAUD yang mengikuti program Pendidikan Berbasis Karakter Holistik (PHBK) di Kalimantan Selatan, Indonesia. Desain penelitian yang digunakan adalah desain eksplanatori kuantitatif yang melibatkan 113 guru PAUD dari 16 lembaga PAUD inti dan lembaga PAUD Berkembang Tingkat 5 di delapan kabupaten/kota. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner skala Likert lima poin yang mengukur pendidikan holistik, budaya sekolah, motivasi kerja, dan kinerja guru. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan analisis jalur, dengan uji Sobel digunakan untuk menguji efek mediasi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan holistik secara signifikan memprediksi motivasi kerja ($\beta = 0,653$, $p < 0,001$) dan kinerja guru ($\beta = 0,201$, $p = 0,006$). Budaya sekolah secara signifikan memprediksi motivasi kerja ($\beta = 0,753$, $p < 0,001$) dan kinerja guru ($\beta = 0,164$, $p = 0,047$).

Motivasi kerja secara signifikan memprediksi kinerja guru ($\beta = 0,591$, $p < 0,001$). Selain itu, motivasi kerja secara signifikan berperan sebagai mediator terhadap pengaruh pendidikan holistik dan budaya sekolah terhadap kinerja guru, dengan efek tidak langsung sebesar 0,386 dan 0,445 masing-masing. Model ini menjelaskan 76,7% varians dalam kinerja guru. Temuan ini menyoroti pentingnya mengintegrasikan pengembangan profesional berbasis nilai, budaya sekolah yang mendukung, dan motivasi kerja intrinsik untuk memperkuat kinerja guru yang berkelanjutan di bidang pendidikan anak usia dini (PAUD).

Kata kunci: pendidikan holistik, budaya sekolah, motivasi kerja, kinerja guru, pendidikan anak usia dini, analisis mediasi

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE) constitutes a critical foundation for human development because experiences during the early years shape children's cognitive, socio-emotional, moral, and behavioral trajectories. Consequently, the quality of ECE cannot be separated from the quality of teachers who organize children's everyday learning experiences. Contemporary scholarship increasingly emphasizes that effective early childhood teaching requires more than technical competence or curriculum implementation; teachers are expected to integrate cognitive, emotional, social, ethical, and cultural dimensions into pedagogical practice. In this context, holistic education has gained renewed attention because it positions children as whole persons whose development cannot be adequately understood through academic achievement alone. Recent scholarship conceptualizes holistic education as an approach that integrates intellectual, emotional, social, ethical, and personal dimensions of development rather than treating them as isolated educational outcomes (Madjid, 2024; Nasir et al., 2024; Özdemir-Yilmazer, 2025).

The holistic orientation is particularly relevant to ECE because young children experience learning through interconnected developmental domains. Teachers therefore require an educational orientation that enables them to recognize children's individuality, emotional needs, social relationships, moral development, and emerging intellectual capacities simultaneously. Surikova and Sidorova (2024), for example, demonstrate that teachers who embrace holistic approaches tend to understand teaching as extending beyond the transmission of subject matter toward the development of the whole person. Similarly, van Olst (2023) argues that holistic teaching challenges reductionist educational practices by recognizing multiple dimensions of human development. These perspectives suggest that holistic education should not be understood merely as a curriculum model but also as a professional orientation that potentially shapes how teachers interpret their roles, interact with children, and organize learning experiences.

This issue becomes particularly important in Indonesia, where ECE teachers operate within increasingly complex expectations concerning child-centered learning, character formation, social-emotional development, and family engagement. The professional performance of teachers therefore represents a strategic determinant of educational quality. Recent empirical evidence consistently indicates that teacher performance is associated with multiple individual and organizational factors, including motivation, professional development, school culture, self-efficacy, leadership, and working conditions (Kholifah et al., 2024; Nisa et al., 2025; Kwon et al., 2025). Rather than viewing teacher performance as an isolated individual outcome, contemporary research increasingly conceptualizes it as an outcome emerging from

interactions between teachers' internal capacities and the organizational environments in which they work.

This perspective is highly relevant to the implementation of Holistic Character-Based Education (Pendidikan Holistik Berbasis Karakter/PHBK) developed by the Indonesia Heritage Foundation (IHF). In South Kalimantan, the implementation and dissemination of PHBK have been supported through partnerships with the Yayasan Amanah Bangun Negeri (YABN). Based on the institutional evaluation data available to the program, 76% of 62 participating ECE institutions across eight regencies reached Development Level 5, the highest level within the program's institutional development framework, while 21 institutions subsequently developed into core ECE institutions disseminating PHBK practices to 222 surrounding institutions. These achievements indicate substantial institutional diffusion of the holistic-character education model. Nevertheless, institutional achievement does not necessarily provide evidence regarding how individual teachers internalize, enact, and sustain the values underlying the program.

This distinction creates an important analytical problem. An institutional evaluation can demonstrate whether a school has achieved a particular level of program implementation, but it may not adequately capture variation in teachers' individual performance. Two teachers working within the same school and exposed to the same curriculum, leadership, facilities, and organizational values may demonstrate different levels of instructional quality, initiative, adaptability, collaboration, and commitment. Consequently, school-level implementation indicators should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of equivalent teacher-level performance. Recent research similarly indicates that teacher performance varies according to individual motivational resources, professional capacities, organizational culture, and psychosocial conditions (Kholifah et al., 2024; Sahito et al., 2025).

Teacher performance in ECE is therefore better understood as a multidimensional construct involving not only the completion of administrative responsibilities but also the quality of pedagogical decision-making, classroom interaction, responsiveness to children's developmental needs, professional initiative, adaptation, and collaboration. Kholifah et al. (2024), for example, operationalized teacher performance through dimensions involving cognitive activation, classroom management, teaching clarity, student support, and adaptation. Their findings demonstrate that teacher performance is influenced by motivational and professional-development mechanisms, suggesting that performance is not merely a function of teachers' formal qualifications but also of the psychological and organizational conditions that enable them to translate competencies into effective practice.

One potentially important but insufficiently examined determinant is teachers' holistic educational orientation. Existing research on holistic education has predominantly concentrated on curriculum philosophy, student development, pedagogical approaches, or educational transformation (Madjid, 2024; Nasir et al., 2024; Özdemir-Yılmaz, 2025). Although these studies establish the educational relevance of holistic approaches, relatively little quantitative evidence has examined holistic education as an individual-level teacher construct and tested whether teachers' internalization of holistic values predicts their professional performance. This distinction is theoretically significant. If holistic education is treated only as an institutional program, its explanatory power for individual teacher behavior

remains unclear. Conversely, if teachers' holistic orientation represents an internalized professional value system, it may influence how teachers understand children, interpret educational goals, respond to classroom complexity, and make pedagogical decisions.

The relationship can be explained through the logic of value congruence and professional enactment. Teachers who perceive education as involving the integrated development of children may be more likely to demonstrate pedagogical practices that are responsive, relational, reflective, and developmentally appropriate. Recent research on holistic teaching supports this proposition by demonstrating that teachers' personal narratives, professional identities, and approaches to teaching influence how holistic principles are translated into classroom practices (Surikova & Sidorova, 2024). Moreover, holistic education has increasingly been associated with cross-curricular thinking and broader understandings of educational purpose, reinforcing the possibility that teachers' holistic orientation functions as an individual resource for professional practice (Özdemir-Yılmaz, 2025).

However, individual orientation alone may not be sufficient to produce consistently high teacher performance. Teachers operate within schools that possess particular norms, values, routines, interpersonal relationships, leadership practices, and expectations. These collective characteristics constitute school culture, which represents the organizational context within which teacher behavior is formed and reinforced. Recent empirical research indicates that school culture is significantly associated with teachers' professional behavior, motivation, engagement, and performance (Fu et al., 2022; Alzoraiki et al., 2024; Budiarto et al., 2024).

Importantly, the influence of school culture may extend beyond a direct relationship with teacher performance. A positive school culture can provide shared expectations, collegial support, professional recognition, psychological safety, and opportunities for collaboration, all of which can strengthen teachers' willingness to invest effort in their work. Fu et al. (2022) found that teachers' perceptions of school culture were associated with work engagement, indicating that organizational culture may influence teachers partly through psychological mechanisms. Similarly, Suyitno (2024) reported that school culture significantly influenced teachers' work motivation, reinforcing the proposition that organizational values can be translated into individual motivational processes.

Evidence concerning the relationship between school culture and teacher performance is also increasingly compelling. Alzoraiki et al. (2024) found a significant positive relationship between school culture and teaching performance, suggesting that a supportive culture characterized by constructive relationships, innovation, and social justice can create conditions conducive to better teaching. In the Indonesian context, empirical studies have similarly reported associations between school culture and teacher performance, although the magnitude and significance of the relationship vary across educational settings. For example, research on ECE teachers found that organizational culture did not always exert a significant direct effect on performance, whereas motivation demonstrated a significant effect (Setyawati, 2023). Such findings are theoretically important because they suggest that school culture may not operate uniformly as a direct determinant of performance and may instead influence performance through intervening psychological mechanisms.

One such mechanism is work motivation. Teacher motivation has consistently emerged as a

critical determinant of professional behavior because it determines the degree of energy, persistence, commitment, and psychological investment that teachers bring to their work. Khun-Inkeeree et al. (2022) demonstrated the importance of intrinsic and identified motivation for school effectiveness, while Kumari and Kumar (2023) found that teacher motivation is significantly related to job performance. More recent evidence further demonstrates that motivation remains an important predictor of teacher performance across different educational contexts (Surlan et al., 2025; Agustina et al., 2025).

The importance of motivation becomes even clearer when examining studies that incorporate mediation mechanisms. Kholifah et al. (2024) demonstrated that teacher motivation and professional development play important mediating roles in explaining teacher performance. Agustina et al. (2025), focusing specifically on ECE teachers, similarly found that motivation mediated the relationships between teacher competence, self-efficacy, and performance. These findings indicate that the pathway from individual or organizational resources to teacher performance may not be exclusively direct. Rather, teachers may first interpret their professional environment and personal capacities psychologically, which subsequently influences the motivational energy that is translated into professional performance.

This mediating perspective is particularly relevant to the relationship between holistic education, school culture, and teacher performance. Holistic education represents an internal value-oriented dimension, whereas school culture represents an external organizational dimension. Work motivation can theoretically connect these two dimensions to observable teacher performance. A teacher who internalizes holistic educational values may develop stronger meaning and purpose in teaching, while a school culture that consistently reinforces those values may provide social and organizational reinforcement. These conditions can strengthen motivation, which subsequently increases the likelihood that teachers will demonstrate sustained effort, initiative, adaptability, and professional engagement.

Recent research provides partial empirical support for this proposed mechanism. Suyitno (2024) found that school culture positively influenced teacher work motivation. Likewise, studies in the Indonesian educational context demonstrate that motivation can function as a pathway linking organizational or individual factors to teacher performance (Marlina et al., 2023; Kholifah et al., 2024; Agustina et al., 2025). Nevertheless, most existing studies have examined motivation as a direct predictor or mediator of variables such as leadership, competence, self-efficacy, working conditions, or professional development. Relatively little attention has been given to whether value-based educational orientation, particularly holistic education, can generate motivational processes that subsequently explain teacher performance.

A second limitation concerns the fragmentation of existing explanatory models. Studies of teacher performance commonly investigate school culture, leadership, competence, self-efficacy, work environment, or motivation separately or in relatively conventional combinations. For example, Nisa et al. (2025) examined school culture and instructional leadership through teacher self-efficacy, while Kholifah et al. (2024) examined managerial support, working conditions, professional development, and motivation. These studies provide valuable evidence regarding organizational and psychological pathways, but they do not address the distinctive question of whether a holistic educational orientation can function as an antecedent of teacher motivation and performance.

The gap becomes particularly significant in ECE because holistic education is conceptually aligned with the developmental characteristics of young children. A teacher's understanding of the child as a whole person may influence not only instructional strategies but also emotional responsiveness, relationship-building, classroom organization, parental communication, and willingness to adapt teaching to individual developmental needs. Yet empirical studies have rarely tested this proposition using a quantitative model that simultaneously incorporates an individual value orientation, organizational culture, and teacher motivation. Thus, the current study addresses a gap at the intersection of holistic pedagogy, organizational culture, teacher motivation, and professional performance.

The South Kalimantan context provides an especially relevant empirical setting for addressing this gap. The extensive implementation of PHBK through IHF and YABN creates a distinctive educational ecosystem in which holistic and character-based values are explicitly promoted at the institutional level. This context makes it possible to examine an important question that cannot be adequately answered through conventional teacher-performance research: Does the institutional presence of a holistic educational program translate into stronger individual teacher performance, and if so, through what motivational mechanism? The question is particularly important because institutional program success and individual teacher performance may not necessarily develop at the same rate.

The distinction between institutional implementation and individual enactment also responds to a broader issue in educational improvement. A school may formally adopt a particular educational philosophy, but the effectiveness of that philosophy ultimately depends on whether teachers understand, accept, and enact its principles in daily practice. Recent research on holistic teacher education emphasizes precisely this challenge: educational transformation requires teachers to move beyond formal adoption toward deeper professional and personal engagement with holistic principles (Surikova & Sidorova, 2024; Özdemir-Yılmaz, 2025). Therefore, measuring teacher-level holistic orientation may provide a more sensitive indicator of program internalization than school-level implementation scores alone.

Against this background, the present study proposes an integrated model in which holistic education (X_1) and school culture (X_2) function as antecedent variables, work motivation (Z) serves as a mediating variable, and ECE teacher performance (Y) represents the outcome variable. The model assumes that holistic education may influence teacher performance through both direct and motivational pathways, while school culture may shape performance through organizational reinforcement and motivational processes. The model is consistent with recent evidence demonstrating that motivation can mediate relationships between teacher characteristics, organizational conditions, and professional performance (Kholifah et al., 2024; Agustina et al., 2025).

The study therefore contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it extends research on holistic education by operationalizing it as an individual-level teacher construct rather than treating it exclusively as a curriculum or institutional philosophy. Second, it integrates individual values and organizational culture within a single explanatory model, thereby addressing the fragmented nature of previous teacher-performance research. Third, it examines work motivation as a mediating mechanism through which holistic educational orientation and school culture may be translated into teacher performance in ECE, a population that remains

comparatively underrepresented in quantitative mediation research. The study is consequently positioned not merely to test whether these variables are associated, but to explain how an educational value system and an organizational environment may jointly generate the motivational conditions necessary for high-quality teacher performance.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the direct and indirect effects of holistic education and school culture on ECE teacher performance, with work motivation positioned as a mediating variable among ECE teachers in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. The proposed model is expected to provide a theoretically integrated and empirically testable explanation of teacher performance within a holistic-character education context. More broadly, the findings may contribute to the development of teacher-management strategies that move beyond conventional approaches focused exclusively on competence and administrative compliance toward approaches that integrate professional values, organizational culture, motivational processes, and observable performance.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative explanatory research design to examine the structural relationships among holistic education, school culture, work motivation, and teacher performance in early childhood education (ECE) settings. An explanatory design is appropriate when the primary objective is to test theoretically derived relationships among variables and to determine the extent to which predictor variables explain variation in an outcome variable (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hair et al., 2022). The proposed analytical model positioned holistic education (X1) and school culture (X2) as exogenous variables, work motivation (Z) as a mediating variable, and teacher performance (Y) as the endogenous outcome variable. The model was designed to estimate both direct and indirect effects. Specifically, the study tested whether holistic education and school culture were associated with teacher performance directly and whether these relationships were transmitted through teachers' work motivation.

The conceptual model was specified as follows:

- a. $X1 \rightarrow Z$
- b. $X2 \rightarrow Z$
- c. $X1 \rightarrow Y$
- d. $X2 \rightarrow Y$
- e. $Z \rightarrow Y$
- f. $X1 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$
- g. $X2 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$

This structure enables the study to distinguish between the direct contribution of the predictors to teacher performance and their indirect contribution through work motivation. Such an approach provides a more comprehensive explanation of teacher performance than examining bivariate associations separately.

Participants and Sampling

The target population comprised teachers working in PAUD Inti and PAUD Level Berkembang 5 participating in the Pendidikan Holistik Berbasis Karakter (PHBK) development program in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. These institutions were selected because they represented the highest developmental levels within the PHBK evaluation framework and therefore provided an appropriate context for examining teacher-level factors associated with institutional program implementation. The population consisted of 113 teachers from 16 PAUD institutions distributed across eight regencies/cities in South Kalimantan. Because the population was relatively small and all eligible members could be accessed, the study employed a total population sampling (census) approach. Thus, all 113 teachers were invited to participate, eliminating the need to estimate a sample from the population.

The geographical distribution of participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of PAUD Teachers Participating in the PHBK Program

REGENCY/CITY	NUMBER OF PAUD	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	PERCENTAGE
TABALONG	3	14	12.4%
BALANGAN	3	16	14.2%
BANJAR	1	6	5.3%
BANJARMASIN	1	9	8.0%
BARITO KUALA	3	21	18.6%
HULU SUNGAI UTARA	2	9	8.0%
KOTABARU	1	17	15.0%
TANAH LAUT	2	21	18.6%
TOTAL	16	113	100%

Source: Indonesian Heritage Foundation (IHF), 2026.

The census approach strengthens the internal representativeness of the study population because every eligible teacher in the identified PHBK institutions was included rather than selected through probabilistic or convenience sampling. Nevertheless, because the population was restricted to PAUD institutions participating in the PHBK program, the findings should be generalized primarily to comparable PHBK-oriented ECE settings rather than to all Indonesian ECE teachers.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire consisting of four instruments measuring holistic education, school culture, work motivation, and teacher performance. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The instruments were developed or adapted from established theoretical frameworks and subsequently contextualized for ECE teachers participating in the PHBK program. Contextual adaptation was necessary to ensure that the items reflected the pedagogical, organizational, and professional realities of PAUD

institutions rather than merely reproducing generic measures developed for other educational contexts.

Holistic Education

Holistic education (X1) was measured using 30 items developed deductively from Miller's conceptualization of holistic education. The instrument covered six dimensions: physical, emotional, intellectual, social, aesthetic, and spiritual development (Miller, 1990). In the present study, holistic education was conceptualized as the extent to which teachers internalize and apply an integrated understanding of children's development that encompasses multiple dimensions of human growth rather than focusing exclusively on cognitive achievement. This conceptualization is particularly relevant to PHBK because the program explicitly emphasizes character formation and the development of the child as a whole person.

School Culture

School culture (X2) was measured using 21 items adapted from the organizational culture dimensions proposed by Robbins. The instrument consisted of seven dimensions: innovation and risk-taking, attention to detail, outcome orientation, people orientation, team orientation, aggressiveness, and stability. For the purposes of this study, these dimensions were contextualized to the ECE environment to capture the extent to which shared norms, values, expectations, interpersonal relationships, teamwork, innovation, and organizational practices support teachers in performing their professional responsibilities. Because organizational culture is fundamentally a shared phenomenon, the measurement focused on teachers' perceptions of the values and behavioral norms operating within their respective schools. This approach is consistent with the treatment of organizational culture as a perceptual construct that can be operationalized through members' shared experiences of organizational practices.

Work Motivation

Work motivation (Z) was assessed using 48 items developed on the basis of the two-factor theory of Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959). The instrument incorporated dimensions associated with motivator factors and hygiene factors. The measure was contextualized to the professional environment of PAUD teachers, including aspects related to achievement, recognition, responsibility, professional development, the nature of the work, interpersonal relationships, organizational conditions, and other factors that may influence teachers' willingness to invest effort in their professional roles. In this study, work motivation was treated as a mediating construct, rather than merely as another independent predictor. This specification was based on the theoretical proposition that organizational and value-based conditions may influence employee behavior partly by strengthening the individual's motivation to perform.

Teacher Performance

Teacher performance (Y) was measured using 25 items adapted from the teacher performance framework of Uno and Lamatenggo (2012) and subsequently modified to reflect the characteristics of PAUD teachers and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The instrument assessed teachers' performance in areas relevant to ECE practice, including instructional planning, implementation of learning activities, classroom management, assessment, professional responsibility, collaboration, and adaptation to curriculum and learner needs. The adaptation process was undertaken to ensure that teacher performance was measured in terms of observable and contextually relevant professional behaviors rather than general perceptions of teacher quality.

Instrument Development and Validation

The instrument development process followed several stages. First, items were generated deductively from the theoretical dimensions underlying each construct. Second, the items were reviewed and modified to ensure conceptual alignment with the PHBK context and the characteristics of PAUD teachers. Third, the instruments were subjected to a preliminary empirical assessment before being administered to the research participants. A pilot test involving 20 PAUD teachers who were not included in the main study sample was conducted to assess the clarity, relevance, and psychometric functioning of the questionnaire items. The pilot participants were drawn from PAUD institutions outside the target population to minimize potential contamination between the pilot and main samples. The validity assessment considered the extent to which individual items represented their intended theoretical constructs, while reliability assessment examined the internal consistency of the instruments. The instruments were retained for the main data collection after the preliminary evaluation indicated acceptable validity and reliability. For a Scopus-level manuscript, reporting only a general statement that an instrument was "valid and reliable" is insufficient. Accordingly, the final manuscript should ideally report Cronbach's alpha (α), composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), standardized factor loadings, and item-level validity statistics for each construct. These indicators provide stronger evidence regarding measurement quality than Cronbach's alpha alone (Hair et al., 2022).

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants received information concerning the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of their responses, and the use of the data exclusively for research purposes. Participants were instructed to complete the questionnaire independently and to respond according to their actual experiences within their respective PAUD institutions. To reduce potential response bias, participants were informed that there were no right or wrong answers and that their individual responses would not affect their employment status or professional evaluation. The data collection procedure was conducted after obtaining permission from the relevant institutions and program stakeholders. The researchers subsequently screened the responses for completeness before proceeding to statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis consisted of two main stages: descriptive analysis and inferential analysis.

First, descriptive statistics were used to characterize the distribution of scores for each research variable. The analysis included measures of central tendency and dispersion, including mean and standard deviation. The categorization of respondents' scores was conducted using the mean $\pm$ standard deviation ($M_i \pm SD_i$) approach to provide an interpretive description of the levels of holistic education, school culture, work motivation, and teacher performance. Second, path analysis was employed to test the hypothesized relationships among the four study variables. Path analysis was selected because the research model simultaneously specifies multiple direct and indirect relationships among observed variables and therefore permits the estimation of mediation effects within a theoretically specified causal structure.

The analytical model consisted of two structural equations:

Model 1:

$$Z = a_0 + a_1X_1 + a_2X_2 + e_1$$

where Z represents work motivation, X_1 represents holistic education, X_2 represents school culture, and e_1 represents the residual term.

Model 2:

$$Y = b_0 + c_1'X_1 + c_2'X_2 + bZ + e_2$$

where Y represents teacher performance, c_1' and c_2' represent the direct effects of holistic education and school culture on teacher performance, b represents the effect of work motivation on teacher performance, and e_2 represents the residual term.

The indirect effects were estimated as:

- a. Holistic education $\rightarrow$ work motivation $\rightarrow$ teacher performance: a_1b
- b. School culture $\rightarrow$ work motivation $\rightarrow$ teacher performance: a_2b

The total effect of each predictor was interpreted as the combination of its direct and indirect effects.

Assumption Testing

Before estimating the path model, the data were examined for the assumptions required for regression-based analysis. The assessment included normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, and independence of residuals. Normality was examined using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. The obtained significance values ranged from 0.061 to 0.078, exceeding the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating no statistically significant departure from normality. Linearity was evaluated through the deviation-from-linearity test. The obtained significance values ranged from 0.051 to 0.083, suggesting that the relationships between the predictors and outcome variables were adequately represented by linear functions.

Homoscedasticity was examined to determine whether the variance of residuals remained reasonably constant across predicted values. The results indicated no evidence of

problematic heteroscedasticity. Multicollinearity was assessed using tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics. The tolerance values exceeded 0.10 and the VIF values were below 10, indicating that the predictor variables did not exhibit problematic multicollinearity.

Finally, the Durbin–Watson statistic was 1.928, indicating that the residuals were sufficiently independent for the regression-based analysis.

Although these diagnostic tests indicated that the assumptions for path analysis were adequately satisfied, assumption testing was treated as a diagnostic procedure rather than as evidence of causal validity. Statistical association alone does not establish causality, particularly in a cross-sectional design.

Mediation Analysis

The mediating role of work motivation was assessed by examining whether holistic education and school culture were associated with teacher performance indirectly through work motivation. The original analysis employed the Sobel test to determine the statistical significance of the indirect effects. However, because indirect effects frequently exhibit non-normal sampling distributions, contemporary mediation analysis recommends bootstrap confidence intervals as a more robust approach than relying exclusively on the Sobel test (Hayes, 2022). Therefore, for a stronger Scopus Q1 presentation, the indirect effects should preferably be evaluated using bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals with at least 5,000 resamples.

An indirect effect would be considered statistically significant when its bootstrap confidence interval does not include zero. The mediation was interpreted according to the relationship between the direct and indirect effects:

- a. Indirect-only mediation when the indirect effect is significant but the direct effect is not;
- b. Complementary mediation when both direct and indirect effects are significant and operate in the same direction; and
- c. Competitive mediation when both effects are significant but operate in opposite directions.

This approach provides a more informative interpretation of the mechanism through which holistic education and school culture may influence teacher performance.

Statistical Significance and Effect Interpretation

Statistical significance was evaluated using a two-tailed $\alpha = .05$ criterion. In addition to p -values, the interpretation of the findings should emphasize the magnitude and direction of the estimated coefficients. This is particularly important because statistical significance can be influenced by sample size, whereas effect size provides information regarding the substantive importance of the observed relationships. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to estimate the proportion of variance in work motivation and teacher performance explained by the predictors in the respective structural models. Direct, indirect, and total effects were reported to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the proposed theoretical

model. All statistical analyses were conducted using statistical software capable of performing multiple regression/path analysis. For publication at the Scopus Q1 level, the final manuscript should explicitly report the software and version, estimation procedure, standardized and unstandardized coefficients, standard errors, confidence intervals, *t/z* statistics, *p*-values, and effect sizes.

Ethical Considerations

The study involved adult professional participants and adhered to fundamental principles of research ethics, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw. Participants were informed about the research objectives and the intended use of the data before completing the questionnaire. Because the study was conducted within an educational organizational context in which teachers may perceive institutional pressure to participate, particular attention was given to ensuring that participation was voluntary and that individual responses could not be traced back to individual teachers in reporting the findings. Data were analyzed and presented in aggregate form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis provides an initial overview of the distribution and level of holistic education, school culture, work motivation, and teacher performance among PAUD teachers participating in the PHBK program in South Kalimantan. As shown in Table 2, all four constructs were generally categorized as very high. Nevertheless, the relatively high aggregate scores should not be interpreted as indicating the absence of developmental needs. Examination at the dimensional and indicator levels revealed several areas in which teachers and schools still require targeted improvement.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

VARIABLE	MEAN	VERY HIGH (%)	HIGHEST DIMENSION	LOWEST DIMENSION
HOLISTIC EDUCATION (X1)	129.87	76.99	Physical (4.5)	Intellectual (4.1)
SCHOOL CULTURE (X2)	92.56	87.61	Innovation & attention to detail (4.5)	Stability (4.0)
WORK MOTIVATION (Z)	205.88	73.45	Meaning of teaching as a calling (4.6)	Salary congruence (3.8)
TEACHER PERFORMANCE (Y)	104.92	72.57	Work ability (4.3)	Speed & communication (4.0)

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

The descriptive findings indicate a generally favorable professional profile among teachers participating in the PHBK program. School culture had the highest proportion of teachers classified within the very-high category (87.61%), followed by holistic education (76.99%), work motivation (73.45%), and teacher performance (72.57%). This pattern suggests that the institutional environment may provide a relatively strong foundation for teachers' professional functioning. However, the dimensional results provide a more nuanced picture. In holistic education, the physical dimension obtained the highest mean score (4.5), whereas the intellectual dimension had the lowest overall score (4.1). At the indicator level, the lowest score was associated with teachers' ability to differentiate children's individual learning styles (3.9). This finding is important because holistic education is not limited to character formation or spiritual development; it also requires teachers to recognize cognitive diversity and adapt learning experiences to individual developmental needs.

Similarly, school culture was generally strong, particularly in innovation and attention to detail (4.5). Nevertheless, the stability dimension obtained the lowest score (4.0), with consistency in implementing workplace rules scoring 3.9. This suggests that a positive organizational culture does not automatically guarantee uniformity in the implementation of organizational expectations. Strengthening consistency, shared procedures, and institutional accountability may therefore be necessary to transform positive organizational values into stable professional practices. The motivational profile provides another important finding. The highest score was observed for the perception that being a PAUD teacher represents a meaningful professional calling (4.6), whereas salary congruence received the lowest score (3.8). This contrast indicates that teachers' motivation is strongly associated with intrinsic meaning, even though material conditions remain a relatively weaker aspect of their work experience. Such a pattern is particularly relevant to the PHBK context because the program explicitly emphasizes character, meaning, values, and the holistic development of educators and children.

Teacher performance was also categorized as very high, with work ability representing the strongest dimension (4.3). However, relatively lower scores were identified in speed and communication (4.0), while specific indicators related to enrichment programs and the application of recent educational research received scores of approximately 3.8. These findings suggest that the major challenge is no longer basic professional functioning but the development of higher-order professional practices, particularly evidence-informed teaching, pedagogical differentiation, professional communication, and continuous instructional improvement. Taken together, these descriptive results demonstrate that high institutional and individual scores coexist with specific developmental gaps. Therefore, subsequent path analysis is necessary to determine whether the observed variation in teacher performance can statistically be explained by holistic education, school culture, and work motivation.

Assessment of Regression Assumptions

Before conducting the path analysis, the data were examined for the assumptions underlying regression-based analysis. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test produced significance values ranging from 0.061 to 0.078, exceeding the 0.05 criterion. The residuals were therefore considered sufficiently normally distributed for subsequent parametric analysis. The

linearity tests also supported the appropriateness of the proposed relationships. The significance values for deviation from linearity ranged from 0.051 to 0.083, indicating no statistically significant departure from linearity. Visual inspection of the scatterplots further indicated that the residuals were distributed without a systematic funnel-shaped pattern, providing no evidence of problematic heteroscedasticity.

Multicollinearity was also not identified. The tolerance values exceeded 0.10 and the VIF values were below 10, indicating that the predictor variables did not demonstrate problematic levels of intercorrelation. Finally, the Durbin–Watson statistic was 1.928, suggesting that the residuals did not exhibit problematic autocorrelation. Overall, the diagnostic results indicated that the data satisfied the principal assumptions required for regression-based path analysis. Consequently, the hypothesized direct and indirect relationships among holistic education, school culture, work motivation, and teacher performance could be examined.

Direct Effects and Hypothesis Testing

The path analysis demonstrated that all five hypothesized direct relationships were positive and statistically significant. The complete results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Direct Effects and Hypothesis Testing

HYPOTHESIS	RELATIONSHIP	B	T	P	DECISION
H1	Holistic Education → Work Motivation	0.653	9.088	< .001	Supported
H2	School Culture → Work Motivation	0.753	12.050	< .001	Supported
H3	Work Motivation → Teacher Performance	0.591	8.210	< .001	Supported
H4	Holistic Education → Teacher Performance	0.201	2.832	.006	Supported
H5	School Culture → Teacher Performance	0.164	2.013	.047	Supported

Note. β = standardized path coefficient.

The results show that school culture was the strongest predictor of work motivation ($\beta = 0.753$, $t = 12.050$, $p < .001$), followed by holistic education ($\beta = 0.653$, $t = 9.088$, $p < .001$). Work motivation, in turn, significantly predicted teacher performance ($\beta = 0.591$, $t = 8.210$, $p < .001$). Both holistic education and school culture also retained significant direct relationships with teacher performance, although their direct coefficients were substantially smaller than the coefficient of work motivation. The model predicting work motivation from holistic education and school culture produced an R^2 of 0.427. Thus, approximately 42.7% of the variance in teachers' work motivation was statistically explained by holistic education and school culture. The remaining 57.3% may be associated with other individual and organizational factors not included in the present model. For the teacher-performance model, the reported R^2 was 0.767, indicating that the predictors included in the final model jointly

accounted for approximately 76.7% of the variance in teacher performance. This represents a substantial explanatory proportion and suggests that the proposed framework has considerable empirical relevance in explaining differences in teacher performance within the sampled PHBK schools.

Holistic Education as a Predictor of Work Motivation

The first hypothesis proposed that holistic education would positively predict teachers' work motivation. The analysis supported this hypothesis ($\beta = 0.653$, $t = 9.088$, $p < .001$). The magnitude of the standardized coefficient indicates a substantial positive association: teachers who reported stronger internalization of holistic educational principles also tended to report higher levels of work motivation. The finding is theoretically meaningful because holistic education in the PHBK context represents more than a pedagogical technique. It provides a value framework through which teachers interpret their professional responsibilities. When teachers perceive children's development as an integrated process involving physical, emotional, intellectual, social, aesthetic, and spiritual dimensions, teaching may acquire a stronger sense of purpose and professional meaning.

The descriptive findings reinforce this interpretation. The highest motivational indicator was the perception that teaching PAUD represents a meaningful calling ($M = 4.6$). Thus, the statistical relationship between holistic education and motivation appears consistent with the substantive orientation of the program: teachers' professional motivation is not exclusively dependent on extrinsic rewards but is also connected to their interpretation of teaching as meaningful work. This result is consistent with recent research emphasizing the importance of values, professional meaning, and supportive educational environments in strengthening teacher motivation (Miseliunaite et al., 2022; Makalew, 2023). However, the present findings extend this literature by positioning holistic education as an individual-level value orientation rather than merely as an institutional educational philosophy. Importantly, the finding should not be interpreted as establishing causality beyond the study design. Because the research employed a cross-sectional survey, the evidence supports a statistically significant predictive pathway rather than definitive temporal causation.

School Culture as the Strongest Predictor of Work Motivation

H2 was also supported. School culture had a positive and statistically significant relationship with work motivation ($\beta = 0.753$, $t = 12.050$, $p < .001$). Among all direct pathways examined in the model, this was the largest coefficient. The corresponding R^2 of 0.427 for the motivation equation indicates that holistic education and school culture together explained 42.7% of the variance in work motivation. The magnitude of the school-culture coefficient suggests that the organizational environment is particularly important in shaping teachers' motivational conditions.

This finding can be interpreted using organizational and motivational perspectives. A school culture characterized by innovation, shared expectations, teamwork, attention to quality, and supportive interpersonal relationships provides teachers with social and psychological cues regarding what behaviors are valued by the organization. In such an environment, teachers may experience stronger identification with institutional goals and greater willingness to invest effort in their professional roles. The finding is consistent with recent evidence

indicating that school culture is associated with teacher motivation and performance (Rachman et al., 2023; Syahminan et al., 2024; Parveen et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the present analysis contributes an important additional insight: school culture appears to operate more strongly through teachers' motivational states than through a direct behavioral pathway alone. This interpretation becomes clearer when the direct and indirect effects are compared.

Work Motivation as a Predictor of Teacher Performance

The third hypothesis was supported. Work motivation positively predicted teacher performance ($\beta = 0.591$, $t = 8.210$, $p < .001$). This coefficient represents the strongest direct predictor of teacher performance in the model. The result indicates that teachers who experience stronger motivation tend to demonstrate higher levels of professional performance. This relationship is particularly relevant to PAUD because teaching young children requires sustained emotional involvement, patience, creativity, responsiveness, and commitment. These demands cannot be fully explained by technical competence alone.

The descriptive findings provide further support for this interpretation. Teachers reported a particularly high level of agreement with the statement that teaching PAUD constitutes a meaningful professional calling ($M = 4.6$). This suggests that intrinsic meaning may constitute an important motivational resource in sustaining teachers' professional engagement, even when extrinsic conditions such as salary satisfaction are comparatively less favorable ($M = 3.8$). The finding is consistent with previous studies demonstrating the importance of teacher motivation for professional performance (Permana & Eliza, 2022; Norlatifah et al., 2024; Santoso et al., 2025). The present study, however, provides additional evidence within a value-based PAUD development context, where motivational meaning appears particularly salient.

4.7. Direct Effect of Holistic Education on Teacher Performance

H4 was supported, with holistic education demonstrating a positive and statistically significant direct effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.201$, $t = 2.832$, $p = .006$).

Although the coefficient was smaller than that of work motivation, its statistical significance is theoretically important. It indicates that holistic education is associated with teacher performance through a pathway that is not completely dependent on motivation. One possible explanation is that holistic education provides teachers with an integrated pedagogical orientation that directly informs classroom practice. Teachers who understand children as multidimensional learners may be more likely to design learning experiences that accommodate children's physical, emotional, social, cognitive, aesthetic, and spiritual needs.

The relatively modest direct coefficient should nevertheless be interpreted carefully. It suggests that simply possessing or endorsing holistic educational values is insufficient to produce optimal teacher performance. Rather, the subsequent mediation analysis indicates that the influence of holistic education becomes substantially stronger when it is translated into motivational engagement. This distinction represents one of the central contributions of the present model. Holistic education appears to function simultaneously as a professional orientation and as an antecedent of teachers' motivational states.

Direct Effect of School Culture on Teacher Performance

H5 was supported, although the effect was comparatively modest ($\beta = 0.164$, $t = 2.013$, $p = .047$). School culture therefore had a statistically significant positive relationship with teacher performance after accounting for the other variables in the model. The result confirms that organizational context matters for teacher performance. A school culture emphasizing innovation, teamwork, shared standards, and professional responsibility may establish behavioral expectations that guide teachers' daily practices. However, the relatively small direct coefficient compared with the much stronger relationship between school culture and work motivation ($\beta = 0.753$) suggests that school culture may influence performance primarily through teachers' psychological and motivational states. This possibility is formally examined through the mediation analysis below.

Indirect Effect of Holistic Education on Teacher Performance through Work Motivation

The mediation analysis supported H6. The indirect effect of holistic education on teacher performance through work motivation was calculated as:

$$0.653 \times 0.591 = 0.386.$$

The Sobel test yielded $t = 6.062$, exceeding the critical value of 1.981. Thus, the indirect pathway was statistically significant.

The magnitude of the indirect effect (0.386) was greater than the direct effect of holistic education on teacher performance (0.201). The total effect was approximately 0.587.

Table 4. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

PREDICTOR	DIRECT EFFECT ON Y	INDIRECT EFFECT VIA Z	APPROX. TOTAL EFFECT
HOLISTIC EDUCATION	0.201	0.386	0.587
SCHOOL CULTURE	0.164	0.445	0.609

Note. Y = teacher performance; Z = work motivation.

This pattern indicates that work motivation functions as an important transmission mechanism between holistic education and teacher performance. The larger indirect pathway suggests that the value orientation represented by holistic education is more strongly translated into professional performance when it is accompanied by motivational internalization. In substantive terms, holistic education may provide teachers with a framework for understanding **why** their work matters, while work motivation transforms this understanding into sustained effort and professional engagement. The statistical pathway therefore suggests a sequence in which professional values are internalized, motivational energy is strengthened, and performance is subsequently enhanced. This finding provides an important refinement of previous research that has generally examined educational philosophy and teacher performance as relatively separate constructs. Rather than treating holistic education as a direct pedagogical input, the present model suggests that its effectiveness depends partly on its capacity to generate motivational engagement.

Indirect Effect of School Culture on Teacher Performance through Work Motivation

The mediation analysis also supported H7. The indirect effect of school culture on teacher performance through work motivation was:

$$0.753 \times 0.591 = 0.445.$$

The Sobel test produced $t = 6.783$, which exceeded the critical value of 1.981. Therefore, the indirect pathway was statistically significant.

The indirect effect (0.445) was substantially larger than the direct effect of school culture on teacher performance (0.164). The approximate total effect was 0.609.

This pattern provides stronger evidence that work motivation represents a key psychological mechanism through which organizational culture is translated into professional performance. Although school culture can directly shape professional behavior through shared norms and expectations, its influence becomes considerably stronger when it succeeds in strengthening teachers' motivation. The result is consistent with organizational perspectives in which employee behavior emerges from the interaction between organizational context and individual psychological processes. In the present study, school culture represents the contextual component, whereas work motivation represents the psychological mechanism connecting organizational conditions to observable professional performance. The finding also extends earlier studies that identified significant direct relationships between school culture and teacher performance (Syahminan et al., 2024; Makalew, 2023). Those relationships remain evident in the current analysis; however, the substantially larger indirect effect suggests that the organizational environment should not be viewed merely as a set of formal rules or institutional practices. Its effectiveness depends on whether teachers internalize the values embedded in that environment and convert them into motivational energy.

Comparative Strength of the Pathways

An important feature of the model is the relative magnitude of the estimated pathways. The strongest direct relationship was between school culture and work motivation ($\beta = 0.753$), followed by holistic education and work motivation ($\beta = 0.653$) and work motivation and teacher performance ($\beta = 0.591$).

In contrast, the direct relationships between the two contextual/value predictors and teacher performance were substantially smaller: $\beta = 0.201$ for holistic education and $\beta = 0.164$ for school culture.

This pattern indicates that the model is not adequately described by a simple direct-effects framework. Instead, the results point toward a motivational transmission model, in which the conditions represented by holistic education and school culture are translated into teacher performance primarily through work motivation.

The comparison of indirect and direct effects reinforces this interpretation:

- a. Holistic education $\rightarrow$ teacher performance: direct = 0.201; indirect = 0.386.
- b. School culture $\rightarrow$ teacher performance: direct = 0.164; indirect = 0.445.

Thus, the indirect pathway is approximately 1.92 times the direct pathway for holistic education and approximately 2.71 times the direct pathway for school culture. This finding is particularly important because it shifts the interpretation of teacher performance from a predominantly behavioral outcome toward a process involving values, organizational context, and psychological motivation.

4.12. Integrated Interpretation of the Findings

The overall results support the proposed conceptual model in which holistic education and school culture operate through both direct and motivational pathways to teacher performance.

The findings can be summarized in the following sequence:

Holistic Education → Work Motivation → Teacher Performance

And School Culture → Work Motivation → Teacher Performance.

The evidence indicates that holistic education and school culture independently contribute to work motivation, while work motivation subsequently contributes substantially to teacher performance. Both predictors also maintain statistically significant direct relationships with performance, indicating that mediation is not exclusive. The model therefore suggests a complementary mediation pattern rather than a purely indirect model. In other words, holistic education and school culture influence teacher performance both directly and through work motivation.

This is theoretically meaningful. Holistic education provides a value-based framework for understanding the purpose and meaning of teaching, whereas school culture provides the organizational environment in which these values can be reinforced, enacted, and socially reproduced. Work motivation connects these two levels by converting values and environmental conditions into psychological energy for professional action. The relatively high R^2 of 0.767 for teacher performance further indicates that the combined model has substantial explanatory capacity within the sampled population. Nevertheless, the remaining 23.3% of unexplained variance should not be disregarded. Teacher performance is a multidimensional phenomenon and may also depend on professional competence, leadership, workload, compensation, teacher self-efficacy, teaching resources, job satisfaction, professional development, and other contextual factors not included in the present model.

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Table 5. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

HYPOTHESIS	PROPOSED RELATIONSHIP	RESULT	INTERPRETATION
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H1	Holistic education → work motivation	Supported	Holistic education positively predicts work motivation
H2	School culture → work motivation	Supported	School culture is the strongest direct predictor of work motivation
H3	Work motivation → teacher performance	Supported	Work motivation positively predicts teacher performance
H4	Holistic education → teacher performance	Supported	Holistic education has a significant direct effect
H5	School culture → teacher performance	Supported	School culture has a significant direct effect
H6	Holistic education → work motivation → teacher performance	Supported	Work motivation significantly mediates the relationship
H7	School culture → work motivation → teacher performance	Supported	Work motivation significantly mediates the relationship

Main Empirical Contributions

Three empirical conclusions emerge from the analysis.

First, school culture represents the strongest immediate antecedent of teacher motivation. The coefficient of $\beta = 0.753$ demonstrates that organizational conditions are highly relevant to teachers' motivational experiences. This finding emphasizes that improving teacher performance cannot rely solely on individual professional development; it also requires the creation of a school environment that consistently reinforces professional values. Second, work motivation is the strongest direct predictor of teacher performance. With $\beta = 0.591$, motivation demonstrates greater predictive strength than either holistic education ($\beta = 0.201$) or school culture ($\beta = 0.164$). This indicates that institutional and philosophical resources become more consequential when they are translated into teachers' motivational engagement. Third, the mediation results reveal that the strongest pathways to teacher performance operate indirectly through work motivation. The indirect effect of school culture (0.445) exceeds its direct effect (0.164), while the indirect effect of holistic education (0.386) exceeds its direct effect (0.201). Consequently, interventions aimed at improving teacher performance through PHBK should not stop at strengthening school culture or communicating holistic educational principles. They should deliberately cultivate teachers' intrinsic motivation, professional meaning, and sense of calling.

DISCUSSION

The findings provide empirical support for an integrated model in which holistic education and school culture contribute to PAUD teacher performance both directly and indirectly through work motivation. All seven hypotheses were supported, with school culture

demonstrating the strongest direct association with work motivation ($\beta = 0.753$), followed by holistic education ($\beta = 0.653$) and work motivation with teacher performance ($\beta = 0.591$). Importantly, the indirect effects of holistic education ($\beta = 0.386$) and school culture ($\beta = 0.445$) through work motivation were larger than their respective direct effects on teacher performance. This pattern suggests that teacher performance in PHBK-oriented PAUD institutions is not adequately explained by individual values or organizational conditions alone. Rather, these factors become more consequential when they are translated into teachers' motivational engagement with their professional roles. Recent research similarly emphasizes that teacher motivation is a central mechanism linking organizational conditions, professional engagement, and performance. Kumari and Kumar (2023), for example, found that motivation significantly predicted teachers' job performance, while Kholifah et al. (2024) demonstrated that motivation could function as a mediating mechanism in explaining teacher performance.

The significant effect of holistic education on work motivation ($\beta = 0.653$, $p < .001$) indicates that teachers' internalization of holistic principles is associated with stronger motivational resources. This finding is theoretically important because holistic education is frequently conceptualized as an educational philosophy concerned primarily with learners rather than with teachers' psychological processes. Recent scholarship nevertheless emphasizes that holistic education involves the integration of intellectual, emotional, social, physical, moral, and spiritual dimensions rather than a narrow focus on academic achievement. Miseliunaite et al. (2022), through a systematic review, found that holistic education is increasingly positioned as an integrated educational approach capable of addressing multidimensional human development. Similarly, van Olst (2023) conceptualized holistic teaching as an approach that resists reductionist understandings of education by recognizing the whole person. Surikova and Sidorova (2024) further showed through teachers' narratives that holistic approaches become embedded in teachers' professional identities and ways of approaching their work.

Within the present study, this theoretical proposition is reflected in the particularly high score for the perception that teaching PAUD constitutes a meaningful professional calling ($M = 4.6$). The result suggests that holistic education may provide teachers with a meaning-making framework through which professional tasks are interpreted as more than routine instructional responsibilities. Teachers who understand child development as multidimensional may consequently perceive their professional contribution as more meaningful, which can strengthen intrinsic motivation. The relatively lower score for the intellectual dimension of holistic education, particularly teachers' capacity to differentiate children's learning styles (3.9), however, indicates that the internalization of holistic values does not necessarily imply equally strong competence across all dimensions. This distinction is important: holistic orientation may constitute a motivational resource while still requiring systematic professional development to translate values into sophisticated pedagogical practices.

The strongest pathway in the model was the effect of school culture on work motivation ($\beta = 0.753$, $p < .001$). This result indicates that organizational context is particularly influential in shaping teachers' motivational conditions. The finding is consistent with Thien and Lee

(2022), who reported that school culture had significant effects on teacher well-being and commitment to teaching, and with Fu et al. (2022), who found that perceived school culture was associated with teachers' work engagement. More recent evidence likewise demonstrates that school culture and organizational climate influence teachers' psychological and professional experiences. Punia and Bala (2023), for example, found that organizational climate significantly predicted teacher enthusiasm, while Suyitno et al. (2023) reported that school culture significantly contributed to teachers' work motivation. Suyitno (2024) subsequently confirmed the positive relationship between school culture and teacher motivation in a larger survey of 220 teachers.

The magnitude of $\beta = 0.753$ in the present study is therefore theoretically meaningful. It suggests that the motivational effects of PHBK may depend substantially on whether its values are embedded in the everyday organizational culture of the school. A school culture characterized by innovation, teamwork, shared expectations, attention to quality, and supportive relationships can provide teachers with social cues concerning what is valued and expected. McChesney and Cross (2023) similarly demonstrated that school culture affects how teachers implement learning obtained through professional development, suggesting that organizational culture functions as an enabling or constraining condition for translating professional learning into practice. The findings of Kouhsari et al. (2024) further demonstrate that collaboration, student relations, and instructional innovation within the school environment are positively associated with adaptive instruction.

The significant relationship between work motivation and teacher performance ($\beta = 0.591$, $p < .001$) constitutes another central finding. This result indicates that motivational resources are not merely attitudinal outcomes but are meaningfully associated with observable dimensions of professional functioning. The finding is consistent with Kumari and Kumar (2023), who found a significant influence of teacher motivation on job performance, and with Bastian et al. (2022), who reported that work motivation was among the factors associated with teacher performance alongside training and competence. Sudrajat (2023) likewise found that work motivation and competence were associated with teacher performance in madrasah settings. More specifically, Agustina et al. (2025) found among early childhood education teachers that motivation significantly contributed to teacher performance and also mediated the effects of competence and self-efficacy. The convergence between these findings and the present study strengthens the argument that motivation constitutes a critical psychological pathway through which teacher capabilities and contextual resources are converted into professional performance.

An important contribution of the present study concerns the simultaneous direct and indirect effects of holistic education and school culture. Holistic education had a direct effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.201$, $p = .006$), while its indirect effect through motivation was larger ($\beta = 0.386$). Likewise, school culture had a relatively modest direct effect on performance ($\beta = 0.164$, $p = .047$), but a substantially larger indirect effect through motivation ($\beta = 0.445$). This pattern indicates complementary mediation, whereby the predictors retain significant direct effects while also exerting stronger effects through the motivational pathway. The finding closely parallels Erdem and Koçyiğit's (2025) analysis of TALIS data, which showed that teacher motivation mediated relationships between school

climate and instructional quality and between school climate and teacher job satisfaction. Importantly, their study also demonstrated that school climate can have both direct and indirect relationships with teacher-related outcomes.

The stronger indirect pathway for school culture is particularly noteworthy. Although school culture directly establishes expectations and norms for professional behavior, its effect appears to be amplified when teachers internalize those expectations as personally meaningful motivational resources. This interpretation is consistent with recent research showing that school culture influences teachers' well-being, engagement, professional commitment, and instructional behavior. Thien and Lee (2023), for instance, found that specific dimensions of school culture were significantly related to teacher well-being, while Selvaraja et al. (2023) demonstrated that school culture could predict school-level performance. Arifin et al. (2024) also reported significant relationships among school culture, teacher motivation, satisfaction, commitment, and teacher performance.

The findings concerning teacher performance also reveal an important distinction between having positive educational values and enacting those values through sophisticated professional practices. Although teacher performance was generally categorized as very high (72.57%), the lower scores for enrichment programs and the application of recent research findings suggest that professional performance remains uneven at the higher-order level. The relatively lower intellectual dimension of holistic education provides a possible explanation: teachers may strongly embrace the philosophical and character-oriented dimensions of PHBK while requiring further support to translate those principles into differentiated, evidence-informed instructional practices. Kouhsari et al. (2024) showed that school collaboration and instructional innovation are particularly relevant to adaptive instruction, reinforcing the importance of organizational environments that enable teachers to experiment, collaborate, and respond to learner diversity.

The high explanatory power of the model is also noteworthy. The reported R^2 of 0.767 indicates that holistic education, school culture, and work motivation together account for a substantial proportion of the variance in teacher performance. This should nevertheless be interpreted as explanatory capacity within the sampled PHBK context rather than as evidence that these variables comprehensively determine teacher performance. Recent literature emphasizes that teacher motivation and performance are multidimensional phenomena influenced by individual characteristics, job characteristics, organizational climate, leadership, professional development, and well-being. Nasar et al. (2025), for example, explicitly identified individual, job, and organizational factors as relevant determinants of teacher motivation and performance, while Sahito et al. (2025) synthesized evidence showing that teacher motivation is shaped by multiple interacting contextual and individual factors.

Overall, the findings extend existing teacher-performance research by positioning work motivation as the central transmission mechanism between value orientation, organizational culture, and professional performance. Rather than treating holistic education merely as a curriculum philosophy or school culture merely as an organizational background variable, the present findings indicate that both operate partly by shaping teachers' motivational experiences. The practical implication is that PHBK implementation should therefore move

beyond program compliance and institutional-level assessment. Professional development should deliberately strengthen teachers' capacity to translate holistic principles into differentiated pedagogy, while school leaders should cultivate cultures characterized by collaboration, innovation, consistency, recognition, and professional autonomy. Such an approach is more likely to transform holistic education from an institutional program into an internalized professional orientation that sustains teacher motivation and, ultimately, improves teacher performance.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that holistic education, school culture, and work motivation are interrelated factors in explaining the performance of early childhood education (PAUD) teachers at Inti PAUD and Level 5 Developing PAUD institutions supervised by PHBK in South Kalimantan Province. Descriptively, all four constructs fell into the "very high" category, indicating that teachers already possess relatively strong orientations toward holistic education, school culture, work motivation, and professional performance. However, there are still aspects that need to be strengthened, particularly differentiated instruction based on children's individual characteristics, consistency in enforcing work rules, material well-being, learning enrichment, and the application of the latest research findings.

Inferentially, holistic education has a positive effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.653$) and teacher performance ($\beta = 0.201$), while school culture has a positive effect on work motivation ($\beta = 0.753$) and teacher performance ($\beta = 0.164$). Work motivation itself is a strong predictor of teacher performance ($\beta = 0.591$). Furthermore, work motivation was found to mediate the effects of holistic education and school culture on teacher performance, with indirect effects of 0.386 and 0.445, respectively. The model as a whole explains 76.7% of the variation in teacher performance, thereby underscoring the importance of an approach that integrates the dimensions of values, organizational environment, and psychological motivation. The main finding of this study is that work motivation serves as both a linking mechanism and a reinforcing factor between holistic education and school culture on the one hand, and teacher performance on the other. Thus, improving the performance of early childhood education teachers cannot be achieved solely through strengthening competencies or fostering school culture; rather, efforts must be directed toward the sustained internalization of professional meaning, the values of holistic education, and teachers' intrinsic motivation.

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