

Personality traits and work performance among academicians in university: leadership styles as a mediator

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ABSTRACT

Psychologists have argued that Western-based explanations of personality traits, leadership styles, and work performance may not capture Eastern norms and values. This study compares academicians' personality traits and work performance in a traditional Indonesian Javanese community using transformational and *Asta Brata* as western and Hindu philosophy of leadership styles scales, respectively. This study uses transformational and *Asta Brata* leadership styles to examine how leadership styles act as mediators between personality traits and work performance. The respondents were 342 academics from East Java universities selected using multistage cluster random sampling. The results showed that the transformational leadership style mediates only the relationship between agreeableness with contextual performance and openness to task performance. *Asta Brata*'s leadership style mediates openness to experience, extraversion, and agreeableness with tasks and contextual performance. In conclusion, academicians recognize that *Asta Brata* is better than the transformational leadership style as a mediator between personality traits and work performance. These data imply *Asta Brata*'s leadership approaches better resemble Javanese leadership and are accepted by followers than transformational leadership. Finally, *Asta Brata*'s leadership styles explain the big five personality traits and work performance better than transformational leadership styles.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The critics of leadership in Eastern societies highlight that the most widely used transformational leadership theory, apparently a Western theory, may differ from Eastern philosophy [1]. The Eastern leadership style is known to be paternalistic, which emphasizes strong relationships with subordinates and involves loyalty and respect [2]. The paternalistic Eastern leadership style, widely explored in academic research conducted in Indonesia, is exemplified by the prominent example of *Asta Brata*. *Asta Brata*'s leadership style is widely used in leadership studies undertaken in the environment of profit-based and non-profit organizations [3]–[7].

Asta Brata's leadership style can be classified as a trait-based approach, comparable to the transformational leadership style. Transformational leaders develop trust, act with integrity, inspire and encourage others, stimulate acting creativity, and focus on followers' demands for accomplishment and

progress [8]. Nevertheless, the difference in *Asta Brata*'s leadership style in Indonesia explains that the leader represents the 'King,' believed to be the intermediary between humans and their God. This leadership is proximately related to the Hindu philosophy in Java, which focuses on the role of teachers and parents [9]. *Asta Brata*'s emphasis on moral values holds great significance and promotes the notion that the Transformational leadership style is distinct and less capable of explaining the behavior of Indonesian leaders [10], [11]. It comprises eight elements, namely *Surya* (sun), *Wayu* (wind), *Chandra* (moon), *Agni* (fire), *Prithiwi* (earth), *Indra* (water/sky/rain), *Waruna* (ocean), and *Yama/Kartika* (Mountain/star) [12]. In summary, *Asta Brata* focuses on harmony and good relations between leaders and followers by acting similarly to the characteristics of a natural god in Hindu philosophy. Meanwhile, transformational leadership emphasizes sharing vision between leaders and followers.

Several past studies have shown inconsistent relationships between personality traits and work performance [13]–[16]. Circumstantial factors are also expected to have a role in the relationship between personality traits and work performance [15], [17]. The factors referred to in previous studies either confirm or weaken the relationship between personality traits and work performance, leading to inconsistencies between these variables. These factors include the leader's personality and perceived leadership style [18], [19]. Nevertheless, perceived leadership style is considered a strong determinant of the relationship between personality traits and work performance, compared to recognizing the leader's personality. Perceived leadership style also influences followers to achieve an organizational goal collectively, influencing others to awaken memorable behaviors in supporting the organization [20], [21]. Through good leadership communication practices, a leader can influence and persuade employees to be more devoted to their organization in order to achieve organizational goals [22]. As a result, good leadership impacts the outcome of strategic planning essential for universities to achieve excellence and competitiveness [23].

Soane *et al.* [19] asserted that follower personality traits are related to performance through the perceived transformational leadership in respondents. Data analysis by Soane *et al.* [19] supported by qualitative data, showed that perceived leadership styles are the key to overall achievement. In addition, only followers with high agreeableness are more willing to cooperate, have a good perception of leadership, and have a significant impression of work performance.

Perceived leadership style determines the relationship between personality traits and work performance [23]. The joint analysis of the three variables provides a foundation for the transformational leadership style. In addition to being criticized for unsuccessfulness in explaining the leadership style of Eastern countries, the transformational leadership style actually contributes to personal relationships and work performance if the score is low or only affects respondents with modest work performance [23], [24]. Therefore, this study re-examines whether the transformational leadership style mediates between personality traits and work performance. Besides utilizing a transformational leadership style, this study also examines the role of *Asta Brata*'s leadership styles as a mediator of the relationships between personality traits and work performances among academicians in higher learning institutions in East Java, Indonesia. The study attempts to address the following questions: i) does the perceived transformational leadership style mediate the relationship between personality traits and work performance?; and ii) does perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style mediate the relationship between personality traits and work performance?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the research method, encompassing its underlying justification, the individuals involved in the study, the sources of data utilized, and the methods employed for analysis. The purpose of this study is to examine whether Western and Hindu leadership styles can be effectively applied in a traditional Indonesian Javanese setting. Additionally, the study aims to compare the impact of these leadership styles on the personality traits and work performance of academicians. The sample consists of 342 academics from universities in East Java, Indonesia, who were chosen through the method of multistage cluster random sampling. The data sources consist of self-report questionnaires that assess the big five personality traits, transformational and *Asta Brata* leadership styles, as well as task and contextual performance. The analysis techniques employed are structural equation modeling and mediation analysis, which are utilized to investigate the associations between the variables and the mediating impacts of leadership styles.

2.1. Study design, population, and sampling

The research design is correlational. The population was lecturers at public and private universities in East Java, Indonesia. There were 20 universities met the conditions of the population based on official National Higher Education Accreditation Agency data. All 20 universities have obtained the A accreditation because they meet the requirements as quality higher education institutions. The research utilized the multistage cluster sampling method that was carried out through two or more sampling stages [25].

First stage, researchers conducted cluster random sampling, each representing the western, central, and eastern zones. The procedure is called primary unit sampling. The researcher conducted a random sampling of the university in each zone. After the university is randomly selected, the researcher chooses based on respondents from the leadership level of the faculty unit. The procedure is called a secondary sampling unit as the second stage. The recruitment procedure for faculty units is done randomly after university selection. In the first stage, 10 universities were selected randomly for this study. In the second stage, five faculties were selected from the 10 universities. Furthermore, all lecturers in selected faculties were contacted to become respondents to this research through the faculty's official email. After three months of data collection, seven lecturers in each faculty were involved in this research. So, 350 respondents have filled out the instrument. These respondents completed the big five inventories and leadership style instruments at the start of the semester. Respondents were contacted three months later to complete the individual job performance instrument. However, eight respondents were incomplete and could not be analyzed further. After going through the process of deleting incomplete data, 342 respondents were declared to be able to be analyzed further.

2.2. Study instruments

This study employed the Likert-type scale with five options ranging from never (1) to always (5). Additionally, 18 items concerning individual work performance utilized the five-scale option ranging from never (0) to always (4). The demographic section focused on collecting respondents' demographic data, including university status (private and public), gender, age, and length of work.

- Personality: the big five inventory (BFI) was used in this study. This questionnaire was developed by with 44 items measuring personality [26].
- Perceived transformational leadership style: this instrument developed 20 items measuring the perspective of followers (the questionnaire is part of the multifactor leadership questionnaire) [27].
- Perceived *Asta Brata* leadership style: the *Asta Brata* instrument, a scale modified from the original scale of *Asta Brata*, comprising 16 items [12].
- Work performance: the individual work performance questionnaire (IWPQ) comprises 18 items [28].

The validity and reliability of the four instruments are carried out in two stages. Stage one involves seven expert judgments to see the suitability of the Indonesian language item to its operational definition. This study used 5 rating categories and 7 rater. Based on the standard that Aiken has set, the minimum Aiken's V standard for this study is 0.75, with a probability of 0.041. All instruments have met the criteria. Furthermore, the four instruments were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis using respondents in a pilot study of 205 lecturers in East Java. Overall, all four instruments have comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) values above 0.95.

2.3. Procedure

Before data collection, the researcher ensured that the university dean gave permission and allowed the researchers to engage with the relevant participants to take part in the study. The researchers also obtained written permission from the ethics committee to approve this study (Reference Number: UM.TNC2/UMREC-1006).

2.4. Data analysis

This study employed structural equation modelling to address the research questions. The analysis was conducted on two models: personality–perceived transformational leadership style–work performance. The model can be seen in Figure 1. The second model is personality–perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style–work performance. The model can be seen in Figure 2. The first model illustrated the mediating effect of perceived transformational leadership style in the relationship between personality and work performance. The second model tests the mediating effect of perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style in the relationship between personality and work performance.

3. FINDING

3.1. Participants' demographic information

There were 128 male and 214 female participated. Public universities had 189 (55.3%) and private universities 153 (44.7%) participants. A total of 143 lecturers (41.8%) were under 35, 136 (39.8%) were 35-45, 39 (11.4%) were 46-56, and 24 (7.0%) were over 56. There were 113 lecturers (33.0%) had worked less than five years, 107 (31.3%) had worked five to ten years, 81 (23.7%) had worked 11 to 20 years, and 41 (12.0%) had worked more than 20 years.

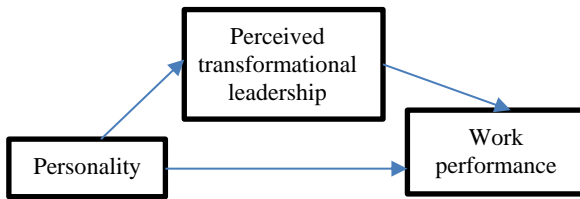


Figure 1. The mediating effects of perceived transformational leadership style

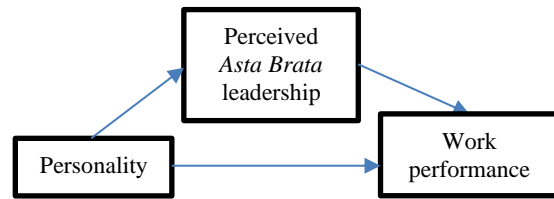


Figure 2. The mediating effect of perceived Asta Brata's leadership style

Perceived transformational leadership style becomes a full mediator only in the relationship between openness to experience with task performance and agreeableness with contextual performance. Meanwhile, perceived *Asta Brata's* leadership style becomes a full mediator in four relationships: openness to experience with task performance and agreeableness with contextual performance. Perceived *Asta Brata's* leadership style is also a full mediator in the relationship between extraversion with task performance and contextual performance. The overall mediator analysis of the perceived transformational leadership style model is shown in Table 1. In contrast, the mediator of the perceived *Asta Brata* leadership style mediator model is shown in Table 2. Trait personality followers are considered to have relationships and influence the followers' perception of their leaders. Table 3 shows the significant effects of each big five personality trait with perceived transformational leadership styles and perceived *Asta Brata* leadership styles.

Table 1 Mediating effects of perceived transformational leadership style

Variables	Direct effect		Indirect effect		Finding
	B	P-value	B	P-value	
O>Transformational-task	-0.145	0.400	0.530**	0.002	Full mediator
C>Transformational-task	0.470***	0.000	0.258**	0.002	Partial mediator
E>Transformational-task	0.170	0.541	-0.024	0.769	No mediator
A>Transformational-task	-0.297	0.428	0.122	0.119	No mediator
N>Transformational-task	0.109	0.326	0.023	0.695	No mediator
O>Transformational-contextual	0.182	0.060	0.003	0.698	No mediator
C>Transformational-contextual	0.366***	0.000	0.025*	0.019	Partial mediator
E>Transformational-contextual	-0.238	0.554	-0.004	0.626	No mediator
A>Transformational-contextual	-0.221	0.164	0.510**	0.005	Full mediator
N>Transformational-contextual	0.015	0.860	0.017	0.067	No mediator
O>Transformational-CWB	-0.204	0.554	0.000	0.807	No mediator
C>Transformational-CWB	-0.085	0.386	-0.001	0.941	No mediator
E>Transformational-CWB	0.157	0.410	0.000	0.812	No mediator
A>Transformational-CWB	-0.185	0.554	-0.002	0.970	No mediator
N>Transformational-CWB	0.328***	0.000	-0.001	0.935	No mediator

*p<0.05; O=openness to experience; C=conscientiousness; E=extraversion; A=agreeableness; N=neuroticism; CWB=counterproductive work behavior. **P<0.01; p<0.001

Table 2 Mediated effect of perceived *Asta Brata's* leadership style

Variables	Direct impressions		Indirect impressions		Finding
	β	P-value	B	P-value	
O> <i>Asta Brata</i> -task	-0.145	0.400	0.489**	0.001	Full mediator
C> <i>Asta Brata</i> -task	0.470***	0.000	0.256**	0.001	Partial mediator
E> <i>Asta Brata</i> -task	0.170	0.541	0.495**	0.004	Full mediator
A> <i>Asta Brata</i> -task	-0.297	0.428	0.040	0.595	No mediator
N> <i>Asta Brata</i> -task	0.109	0.326	0.027	0.594	No mediator
O> <i>Asta Brata</i> -contextual	0.182	0.060	0.003	0.727	No mediator
C> <i>Asta Brata</i> -contextual	0.366***	0.000	0.029*	0.019	Partial mediator
E> <i>Asta Brata</i> -contextual	-0.238	0.554	0.411**	0.001	Full mediator
A> <i>Asta Brata</i> -contextual	-0.221	0.164	0.311**	0.001	Full mediator
N> <i>Asta Brata</i> -contextual	0.015	0.860	0.008	0.198	No mediator
O> <i>Asta Brata</i> -CWB	-0.204	0.554	-0.002	0.585	No mediator
C> <i>Asta Brata</i> -CWB	-0.085	0.386	-0.026	0.168	No mediator
E> <i>Asta Brata</i> -CWB	0.157	0.410	-0.010	0.182	No mediator
A> <i>Asta Brata</i> -CWB	-0.185	0.554	-0.010	0.182	No mediator
N> <i>Asta Brata</i> -CWB	0.328***	0.000	-0.007	0.299	No mediator

*p<0.05; O=openness to experience; C=conscientiousness; E=extraversion; A=agreeableness; N=neuroticism, CWB=counterproductive work behavior. **P<0.01; p<0.001

Table 3 Relationship between follower personality and perceived leadership style

Transformational			<i>Asta Brata</i>		
Variables	Variables	Standardized estimate	Variables	Variables	Standardized estimate
Transformational	<- O	0.03	<i>Asta Brata</i>	<- O	0.027
Transformational	<- C	0.214*	<i>Asta Brata</i>	<- C	0.302*
Transformational	<- E	-0.031	<i>Asta Brata</i>	<- E	0.113*
Transformational	<- A	0.435*	<i>Asta Brata</i>	<- A	0.113*
Transformational	<- N	0.142	<i>Asta Brata</i>	<- N	0.077

*O=openness to experience; C=conscientiousness; E=extraversion; A=agreeableness; N=neuroticism

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The mediation effects of perceived transformational leadership style in the relationship between personality traits and work performance

Analysis of the correlation between openness to experience and task performance was insignificant. Similarly, the relationship between agreeableness and contextual performance was insignificant. Nevertheless, the perceived transformational leadership style mediated. The relationship between openness to experience and task performance, and agreeableness and contextual performance became significant.

Individuals with a high degree of openness to experience tend to find it effortless to generate new ideas. They exhibit curiosity, brilliance, and innovative thinking [26], [28], [29]. The study's findings indicated that with the mediating role of perceived transformational leadership styles (the view that their deans show motivating behavior and focus on essential values and beliefs), there is an opportunity to improve the task performance of the study's respondents positively.

A previous study has found that the leadership style is essential in contributing to an individual's work performance, especially if the individual is receptive to ideas and teaching from the leader. The perceived transformational leadership style is one of the most important elements influencing personality traits and work performance [19], [30]. Transformational leaders can inspire followers to act positively and innovate to achieve organizational goals [26], [31], [32]. Open-minded workers are innovative and quick to innovate. Transformational leaders help them focus on the organization's goals and fulfill the vision and purpose, resulting in great worker performance [33]. Results match earlier research.

Previous studies have stated that Eastern people consider the perceived transformational leadership style fostered in the West less favored, especially in Indonesia [11], [34], [35]. Transformational leadership may not be able to explain in detail the leadership style of Javanese people with strong philosophies and values based on local culture. The transformational leadership style has been questioned regarding leadership efficiency, with Western philosophy contributing to the Javanese personality to produce excellent work performance. Nevertheless, transformational leadership can address the issue of the Javanese leadership style and mediate between openness to experience and task performance in Eastern cultural societies.

Transformational leadership was fully mediated in the relationship between agreeableness and contextual performance. High-agreeable people are selfless, forgiving, trustworthy, attentive, pleasant to most, and willing to collaborate. This investigation found sequential relationship flow. Agreeable followers saw their leaders as transformative. Transformational leaders inspire beneficial work behavior, such as improved contextual performance [36]. Followers' personalities affect their views of leaders. Followers who think their leaders are upbeat and live up to their ideals are likely to behave well at work [37].

Influential leaders depend on how followers process information [38]. The follower evaluates and accepts the leader based on personality similarities. Social identity theory supports this relationship [39]. Some researchers believe that an effective leader emerges from the commensurate leader's characteristics and resembles the perfect leader that followers imagine [40]–[43]. Having something in common boosts contextual performance. Previous study [37] also found that followers with similar characteristics work better and are more intimate with their leaders. Therefore, followers with high agreeableness tend to offer sound judgment to their leaders and perceive them as more transformational since they are like them. Positive feelings also boost followers' initiative, creativity, and contextual performance.

Previous research has indicated that agreeableness is generally connected to the qualities of Javanese people and Eastern civilization, including enjoying collaboration and harmonious relationships, which helps explain this study's choice of examining the Javanese society [44]–[46]. Javanese societies support cooperation and harmony. Javanese people despise confrontations publicly and verbally; they generally appreciate their leaders [47], [48]. These life values concur with the characteristics of agreeableness. One of the dimensions of the transformational leadership style is idealized influence, which indicates that influencing followers to be admired, respected, and trusted is the ideal image of Javanese leaders that followers expect. Followers with high agreeableness values, who view their leaders as having transformational behaviors, are motivated to engage with their work positively. The study also illustrates the

power and magnitude of the mediating role of transformational leadership style perceptions in the relationship between agreeableness and contextual performance.

This study also found a partial mediating effect of the perceived transformational leadership style on the relationship between conscientiousness, task performance, and contextual performance. The relationship established between conscientiousness and contextual performance is tenuous. Nevertheless, the mediating effect of the perceived transformational leadership style in the relationship between conscientiousness and task performance is positive. The role of the mediator implies that the direct relationship between conscientiousness and task performance is significant.

Conscientiousness reliably predicts task and contextual performance. The study found a positive association between conscientiousness and task performance, mediated by perceived transformational leadership. Conscientious people can be trusted to accomplish the assignment and implement the design. They value transformational leaders. Task performance requires followers to plan work, remember goals, set priorities, complete tasks, and manage time [28]. Conscientiousness directly affects work performance without mediation [49]. In this investigation, the transformational leader portrayed a positive association between conscientiousness and task performance.

Based on past studies on Javanese personalities, conscientiousness characteristics are different compared to the attributes of Javanese people. For example, the Javanese work philosophy discourages setting strict targets as they prioritize adaptability and flexibility (expressed through principles like '*Alon-alon waton kelakon*,' '*trimo ing pandum*,' and '*Ojo Ngoyo*') [50]. This results illustrate that the lecturers with high conscientiousness may have a work philosophy that is different from the true Javanese philosophy as they are willing to work diligently according to the goals and responsibilities of the work. Javanese are devoted at work but may be sluggish as they are too heavy-handed to be careful [50]–[53]. On the contrary, highly conscientious individuals exhibit caution in their work and strive to accomplish tasks within a short time frame. Due to the fundamental nature of Javanese culture, the role of a mediator in the context of the transformational leadership style may be limited regarding conscientiousness and work performance.

Some psychologists have found that the transformational leadership style is less effective in explaining the behavioral aspects of organizations in Eastern countries. Eastern societies are characterized by collectivistic values and customs that prioritize group-oriented behavior and emphasize respect for authority figures, often regarded as paternal figures. A strong emphasis is placed on respecting hierarchical structures in Javanese society. Several past studies have shown that this type of relationship is less effective for the transformational leadership style [10]–[12], [46], [53], [54]. Among the debates regarding the transformational leadership style is that it emphasizes lesser followers' trust in leaders and lacks intimate relationships between followers and leaders [55]–[58].

Referring to studies on the role of the transformational leadership style in Indonesian society, one of the weaknesses identified is the lack of specificity among local reviewers regarding which dimensions of the style have the most significant influence on work performance [59]–[63]. The Indonesian context has extensively debated the link between personality and work performance. Most research employed mediator alterations to enhance the image of previously believed inconsistent associations, such as the use of self-efficacy mediators [64], organization citizenship behavior [64] or those that link it to the role of local culture [65]. Although the relationship between personality and work performance has been widely studied with various mediation variables, studies in Indonesia have not investigated the dynamics of relationships between leaders and followers and their role in improving work performance. In other words, this study has contributed to the body of literature by detailing the positive interactions among followers and leaders (based on equality and feelings as part of the group) to improve the intimate relationship between the two parties, thereby stimulating work performance.

The study's results show that the transformational leadership style has its shortcomings, although it may still be used in the context of Eastern culture-oriented organizations with careful application. The dimension of transformational leadership, which is cultivated in Western contexts, intertwines several elements with the Eastern leadership philosophy. Specifically, these elements are related to the principles of relationships and emotional connections within groups and organizations, as seen in the concepts of idealized influence and inspirational motivation. In conclusion, the perceived transformational leadership style has been unable to explain how the leadership style seeks to mediate all five personality traits and two domains of work performance.

4.2. The mediation effect of perceived *Asta Brata's* leadership style in relationship between personality traits and work performance

The study revealed four fully mediated and two significant effects of the perceived *Asta Brata* leadership style. The four full mediator effects are between the relationship of the openness to experience trait with the task performance, the extraversion, and the task performance, the extraversion with the contextual performance, and finally, the agreeableness trait with the contextual performance. In other words,

there are two significant mediators: *Asta Brata* with task performances (openness to experience and extraversion) and *Asta Brata* with contextual performances (extraversion and agreeableness).

The mediator's effect applies to the positive relationship between conscientiousness and task performance. Nevertheless, a weak relationship exists between conscientiousness and contextual performance. Trait neuroticism and counterproductive work behaviors that were previously positive are insignificant in the presence of mediators of perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style.

The first finding is the mediator's effect of perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership on the relationship between openness to experience and task performance. Preliminary analysis revealed no significant direct relationship between openness to experience and perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style and openness to experience and task performance. Nonetheless, a full mediator occurs in perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style for the relationship between openness to experience and task performance.

Past studies have found that openness to experience can less predict work performance [66], [67]. Individuals with an external openness to experience were found to show active retaliation against the environment and generally knew how to move against the situation. In contrast, individuals with an internal openness to experience traits tend to focus their attention inward and be preoccupied with their thoughts, personal emotions, and imaginations. Therefore, they are less aware of changes or potential changes in the work environment. Nevertheless, concurrent analysis of openness to experience and task performance with perceived *Asta Brata* leadership style as a mediator shows that openness to experience positively correlates with task performance if the leader acts in *Asta Brata*'s ways.

Individuals with high openness to experience value have new ideas, like to learn about various things, and are intelligent thinkers who can innovate [28], [29]. *Asta Brata*'s leadership styles also show exemplary behavior, maintaining harmony and good relations with followers, being firm with principles, and motivating followers positively. The study's results illustrate that respondents with high openness to experience have a positive relationship with *Asta Brata* leaders who are open and eager to hear fresh ideas and criticism from their followers and demonstrate the ability to effectively regulate their emotions, creating a more positive work environment. This positive atmosphere further stimulated the participants' innovative thinking and encouraged them to excel in their work [11], [12]. The study's results also illustrate that although past studies show openness to experience does not play a role in influencing task performance, this trait has some good bearing with the form of *Asta Brata*'s leadership style.

Asta Brata's leadership style is a form of leadership style whose origin is exclusively Hindu, which later spread its influence into Javanese society. Past studies on the role of *Asta Brata*'s leadership in Indonesia were widely undertaken in Java [12] and Bali [68]–[71]. One of the principles in *Asta Brata*'s leadership style is to view the leader as a father figure, which requires followers to obey and respect the leader [11]. Similarly, relationships in organizations are a form of interdependence between leaders and followers. Therefore, unsurprisingly, *Asta Brata*'s leadership style seems more instrumental and functional in influencing the respondents' task performance, provided that the respondents have a high level of openness to experience. The present study also shows that *Asta Brata*'s leadership style, a form of indigenous Javanese leadership style, can mediate task performances and openness to experience.

This study also discovered a mediating effect of the perception of *Asta Brata*'s leadership style on the relationship between extraversion and the two dimensions of work performance, namely task performance and contextual performance. Previously, no significant relationship was observed between extraversion and task performance or contextual performance. Nevertheless, the results of this study revealed a strong correlation among the three variables: individuals with high levels of extraversion perceive their leaders positively, exhibit *Asta Brata*'s leadership style, and demonstrate a connection with work performance. Specifically, the result of this study implies that the higher the follower's extraversion, the more followers perceive the leader to show *Asta Brata*'s leadership behavior, which relates to positive work performance. In other words, followers who have positive feelings and perceive their leader as having ideal leadership traits make them feel they are part of the same group as the leader. Psychologists agree that followers who consider themselves part of the group will be willing to engage in work positively and have a high propensity for the task and contextual performance [41]. *Asta Brata*'s leadership style has proven to be a mediator, positively influencing both task and contextual performances in relation to the traits of openness to experience and extraversion. *Asta Brata*'s leadership style has succeeded in surpassing the transformational leadership style [8].

Extraverted tend to be passionate, action-oriented, fond of social environments, flexible, easy to give opinions, and reserved in organizations [13], [27], [28]. One of the strengths of individuals with extraversion is their ability to quickly establish friendships and build relationships with a wide range of people. They often exhibit charisma, excel in group settings, and can be relied upon by others. The characteristics of extraversion seem to be linked to Javanese people who are affectionate, friendly, polite, sensitive in interacting, looking highly at their leaders, and maintaining social structure [51].

The respondents established connections and interacted with their leaders following Javanese traditions, perceiving their leaders as embodying behavioral traits associated with *Asta Brata*'s leadership symbols. Furthermore, followers who view their leader as acting in accordance with *Asta Brata* will begin to cultivate social identity and feel like part of the leader. The common in Javanese culture is hierarchically oriented and attaches importance to status and social order. Unsurprisingly, *Asta Brata*'s leadership style produces better results in understanding aspects of work performance, provided that the Javanese individual has extraversion characteristics. Deans who are perceived as having the characteristics of *Asta Brata* will stimulate followers to engage equally in work, feel as part of the faculty group and be willing to work well, including in task and contextual performance. The *Asta Brata* leader serves as a mediator for individuals with extraversion traits, as the characteristics of *Asta Brata* encourage interaction and communication. They willingly inquire about the challenges and difficulties experienced by their followers. *Asta Brata*'s leader changes his followers' mood to optimistic. They are also a reliable helper for their followers, quickly share knowledge, and are eager to hear ideas from their followers [12]. In addition, an *Asta Brata* leader can stimulate the work performance of extraversion followers by showing a firm attitude and giving direction. A leader with *Asta Brata* will likely demonstrate responsible behavior in principles and the ability to deal with conflict by considering harmony in the working force. The characteristics exhibited by the *Asta Brata* leader may be considered an ideal image favored by followers or have similar characteristics. The behavior makes followers feel part of the group (feelings in-group), with the faculty leader exhibiting *Asta Brata*.

The following discussion is the effect of perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style on the relationship between agreeableness and contextual performance. The results of the study's analysis found a manifestation of the mediator's effect of *Asta Brata*'s leadership style perception in the relationship between agreeableness and contextual performance. This finding was intended for followers with high agreeableness to perceive the leader as showing *Asta Brata*'s behavior, which was subsequently related to contextual performance. The correlation obtained was positive. The result is consistent with past studies that a positive view of leaders arises from the similarity of values and opinions to ensure that followers feel as part of the organization (in-group) [23], which will further stimulate followers to engage in intelligent work behavior.

Agreeableness is a personality trait related to altruistic behavior that is selfless, forgiving, trustworthy, attentive, and kind to almost everyone and likes to cooperate with others. Many studies have been conducted in Asian societies that prove that agreeableness is a societal trademark [72], [73]. Orientals should be encouraged to be respectful, maintain harmony, be kind, keep their hearts, be honest, and cooperate. One of the personal values is agreement, which is also a trait of agreeableness. In contrast, numerous past studies indicate that Eastern societies score high in this trait.

While *Asta Brata* is an equation and conflicts with the characteristics of agreeableness, among the principles similar to agreeableness is prioritizing harmony and virtue by showing the behavior of motivating, guiding, and perceiving followers. Besides, an *Asta Brata* leader acts firmly, disciplined, professionally, intelligent, astute, insightful, open, and trusting. Therefore, agreeableness and *Asta Brata* seem similar, which may have led to a positive linkage among the three variables studied. Contextual performances encompass various aspects such as taking initiative, demonstrating creativity, being willing to share knowledge and skills, and being prepared to undertake challenging tasks.

In other words, the study's findings found that respondents had high agreeableness, viewed the leader more positively, and considered the leader to behave as per *Asta Brata*. Agreeableness values are altruistic and take weight to maintain group harmony. The followers maintain harmony by interacting positively and feel that the leader is in harmony with their imagination. Followers engage in social comparisons between their own group and other groups while demonstrating loyalty to the group led by their leader [74]. Followers with high agreeableness tend to accept their leaders and form more intimate interactions and communication [37], [74]. A leader's intimate interaction with his followers would result in complacency with the leader [42]. This study reveals a consistent pattern that aligns with findings from previous academic research, including freelance studies. Specifically, it indicates that followers who experience higher levels of satisfaction with their leaders exhibit a greater inclination to actively engage in their work [41]–[43]. Finally, these positive relationships will improve contextual performance.

The following discussion explores the mediator's effect of perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style that applies to the relationship of conscientiousness to task performance. Corrections with high conscientiousness were found to be related to brilliant performance behavior [49], [71], [75]. Nevertheless, it is found that the Javanese working habits are slightly different from the characteristics of conscientiousness. The difference is related to the philosophy of work that prioritizes the field period, self-welfare, and working calmly without being pursued by the demands of the limited period (called *alon-alon waton kelakon*, *trimo ing pandum*, and *ojo ngoyo*) [50]. In other words, the Javanese philosophy of work may be more culturally determined. Nevertheless, their actions in the face of an event show a more determined individual. In a recent study, individual trait variations are most important in shaping impressions and perceptions of others [76]. Lecturers with a high conscientiousness trait perceive the leader more positively and exhibit more *Asta Brata*.

Therefore, the role of a leader who has the characteristics of *Asta Brata* may be believed, liked, and perceived positively. In practice, followers become more accepting and realize the importance of leaders in helping them maintain a commitment to the work objectives for which they are responsible.

This study also found that *Asta Brata*'s leadership style role as a mediator was only integral to the relationship between conscientiousness and task performance. Conscientiousness in Eastern societies, particularly in Southeast Asia, is the lowest-scoring trait among the other five traits [72], [73], [77]. Conscientiousness differs in Eastern culture and is explained by efficient, arranged, designed, trustworthy, responsible, and conscientious behavior. These conscientiousness traits are often perceived as less prevalent in oriental cultures due to stereotypes about the typical personality of individuals from these cultures, who may be seen as less inclined and committed to working hard in pursuit of their goals. Certain big five personality traits appear to contradict the typical personality traits found in other Eastern societies [73]. The Japanese and Koreans had low scores in the conscientiousness trait. Nevertheless, they liked to work hard and were highly determined to achieve their goal. Hence, the characteristics of this conscientiousness trait and the actual characteristics of the Japanese and Koreans contradict [78].

The criticisms of the big five are that some indigenous traits may have made little effort in explaining culturally related personality traits, including Eastern societies' working philosophy. The same situation may apply in Indonesia, at least among the study's respondents. The dynamic covers the Javanese's personality and work philosophy between '*Andhap Ashor*,' '*Ewuh pakewuh*,' '*Trimo ing pandum*,' '*Ojo ngoyo*,' and '*Alon-alon waton kelakon*.' In summary, individuals with such personalities tend to lead a life of sincerity, appreciating everything as a gift from God. They approach life slowly and cautiously, prioritizing meaningful experiences and avoiding busyness. Javanese people enjoy the time by calming down and not forcing themselves to be brilliant or excel more than others in the group. The Javanese have a unique approach to work, which differs from the concept of conscientiousness explained in Western theory. This distinction highlights the potential role of perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style as a mediator in the relationship between conscientiousness and work performance.

As discussed before, conscientiousness is related to the perception of followers that the leader is acting as per *Asta Brata*'s theory. Conscientiousness is also related to task and contextual performance. The finding does not apply when the analysis is carried out jointly. *Asta Brata*'s leadership has been seen as a behavior that focuses on example, honesty, patience, harmony, and believing that the milestone which shapes the whole life is the positive courtesy with all humans [79]. These characteristics of leadership distinguish between *Asta Brata* and transformational. *Asta Brata*'s leadership trait differs from transformational leaders' and aligns with Javanese traits. Nevertheless, the leader who acts as per *Asta Brata* does not substantially mediate the relationship between conscientiousness and task performance. The local traits of Javanese individuals, characterized by a preference for a quiet, relaxed, and leisurely lifestyle, may present challenges for the *Asta Brata* leader in effectively motivating them to strive for high achievements in their work.

The study's findings found the form of a full mediator of perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership for openness to experience, extraversion, and agreeableness with task and contextual performances. Another finding indicated that *Asta Brata*'s leadership style is a mediator between conscientiousness and task performance. The study's findings show that *Asta Brata*'s leadership style, which is more based on local culture, seems to be more effective in explaining the relationship between personality and work performance than the transformational leadership style. These findings have several implications for theory and practice.

First, the study contributes to the literature on personality, leadership, and work performance by incorporating the concept of *Asta Brata* leadership style as a Hindu philosophy of leadership that reflects the values and norms of the Javanese culture. Previous studies have mostly used Western-based models of leadership, such as transformational, transactional, or servant leadership, to examine the effects of leadership styles on work performance. This study, however, demonstrates that *Asta Brata* leadership style, which is based on the eight virtues of the sun god in Hindu mythology, can also influence the relationship between personality and work performance. This suggests that leadership styles are not only universal and applicable across cultures, but also specific and contingent on the cultural context.

Second, the study has practical implications for the selection, training, and development of academicians in Javanese universities. The results suggest that personality traits are important predictors of work performance, and that academicians who score high on openness, extraversion, and agreeableness, and low on neuroticism, are likely to perform better in academic roles. Therefore, universities should consider these personality traits when hiring or promoting academicians and provide them with feedback and guidance on how to improve their performance. Furthermore, the results indicate that *Asta Brata* leadership style can enhance the positive effects of personality traits on work performance and mitigate the negative effects of neuroticism. Therefore, universities should also foster and support the development of *Asta Brata* leadership style among academicians and create a culture that values and respects the local wisdom and traditions.

However, the study also has some limitations that need to be acknowledged. The main limitations of this study are the lack of cultural awareness, stereotyping and misunderstanding, and the lack of representation of the sample. The first limitation of this study is the lack of cultural awareness of the researchers and the participants regarding the concept and measurement of *Asta Brata* leadership style. *Asta Brata* leadership style is a complex and multifaceted construct that reflects the values and norms of the Javanese culture, which may not be fully understood or appreciated by the researchers and the participants who are not familiar with the Hindu philosophy and mythology. Furthermore, future studies should also provide workshops, training, and coaching on the implementation of indigenous leadership to the researchers and the participants, to increase their understanding and appreciation of this leadership style, and to reduce the negative perception or underestimation of this leadership style.

Another limitation of this study is the stereotyping and misunderstanding of the transformational leadership style by the researchers and the participants. Transformational leadership style is a widely used and accepted model of leadership in the Western context, but it may not be applicable or suitable for the Eastern context, especially the Javanese culture. The researchers and the participants may have some biases and prejudices against the transformational leadership style and may perceive it as incompatible or inferior to the *Asta Brata* leadership style. This may affect the responses and the results of the study and may create some confounding or moderating effects. Future studies should encourage open dialogue and increase cultural competency among the researchers and the participants, to reduce the stereotyping and misunderstanding of the Transformational leadership style, and to promote the respect and recognition of the diversity and complexity of the leadership styles.

The third limitation of this study is the lack of representation of the sample. The study only involved 342 academicians from East Java universities, and most of them were Javanese. This limits the generalizability and representativeness of the results and may not reflect the diversity and variability of the population of academicians in Indonesia. Moreover, the study did not consider other factors that may influence the relationship between personality traits, leadership styles, and work performance, such as gender, age, education, experience, discipline, or motivation. These factors may have some moderating or mediating effects on the results and may account for some of the variance or differences in the outcomes. Future studies should use larger and more diverse samples, and include academicians from different regions and cultural backgrounds, to increase the external validity and representativeness of the results. Future studies should also work actively to address the systemic barriers and create an inclusive environment for the academicians from different cultures, to ensure their equal participation and representation in the research and practice of the leadership styles.

5. CONCLUSION

Perceived *Asta Brata*'s leadership style appears more effective as a mediator between traits personality and work performance than transformational leadership styles. The model reserved in this study complements the framework of social identity theory by explaining followers' personalities and their perception of the leader who acts as per *Asta Brata* in influencing outstanding work performance. This study also contributes to the theory of the relationship between personality traits and work performance by indicating that conscientiousness is a personality trait that affects respondents' work performance by interpreting various types of work. The perceived transformational leadership style, including that of *Asta Brata*, impacts contextual performances. Nevertheless, models incorporating personality traits, perceived leadership style, and work performance can potentially enhance task and contextual performance.

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