
Examining the Impact of Leadership Approach and Principal's Drive on Educator Productivity: Investigation at a Senior High School in Medan

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the impact of school principal leadership styles and motivation on teacher performance in a senior high school in Medan. Employing a quantitative research approach, the study focuses on a population comprising all teachers and staff at the selected school, with a final sample size of 47 individuals. The findings reveal several conclusions regarding the effects of leadership and motivation on teacher performance.

Individually, the results indicate that leadership significantly influences teacher performance, with the calculated t value for leadership exceeding the critical t value. Likewise, motivation shows a significant effect on teacher performance, as the motivation variable's t value is greater than the critical value, with a significance level of less than 0.05. This suggests that as motivation increases, teacher performance improves correspondingly. Collectively, both leadership and motivation demonstrate a significant impact on teacher performance, evidenced by the calculated F value being greater than the table F value. The coefficient of determination indicates a noteworthy relationship between leadership, motivation, and teacher performance.

The implications of this research emphasize the necessity for school principals to adopt effective leadership styles and promote motivation among teachers to enhance their performance. Future studies may explore additional factors influencing teacher performance and incorporate qualitative methods to gain deeper insights into teacher experiences.

Keywords: Leadership Style, Motivation, Teacher Performance

INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a fundamental process in shaping individuals and acquiring essential knowledge for life. In this context, it plays a dual role: not only as a means to gain skills relevant to the job market but also as a platform for building character and personality. Anthonysamy et al. (2020) highlight that well-structured and organized learning strategies can lead to positive non-academic outcomes in higher education environments. This indicates that education has a broad impact, influencing not just academic performance but also personal development and social interaction. Through education, individuals learn to engage with others, a crucial skill for everyday life. For instance, in school settings, students practice teamwork, effective communication, and building healthy relationships. This process is vital, especially amidst rapid and complex societal changes. Quality education equips students with the ability to adapt and contribute positively to their communities.

However, the challenges facing the education sector today are significant. Various societal changes and multidimensional crises affecting Indonesia have created difficulties in identifying ideal leaders who are deeply committed to their duties and responsibilities. Often, current educational leaders lack a clear vision and mission, which can result in ineffective management of educational institutions. Acosta Castellanos and Queiruga-Dios (2022) emphasize the importance of continuous education to achieve sustainable development goals, which also includes the necessity for effective leadership in education.

The leadership crisis affects not only the management of educational institutions but also the curriculum implemented in schools. The National Curriculum often becomes a burden for school principals, who are expected to enhance it by adding alternative subjects to foster student interest. However, many students still struggle to stay motivated in their studies. This issue arises from the insufficient guidance provided by teachers, who should actively support student development. In this context, principals must take on multiple roles—not only as educators and administrators but also as managers and supervisors capable of implementing quality management practices. They need to approach every member of the school community with a humane perspective, valuing the creativity and concern of teachers regarding the future of the next generation. This aligns with the findings of Liu and Pásztor

(2022), which demonstrate that problem-based learning approaches can enhance critical thinking skills among students, essential in today's modern era.

Quality education aims to elevate the standard of a nation by equipping students with a diverse array of skills and competencies. These abilities not only impact the students themselves but also their peers and social environments. To achieve this goal, it is crucial to establish clear educational standards that guide the execution of the educational process. Frizon and Eugénio (2022) emphasize that recent research in educational management shows the importance of a sustainable approach to education in achieving optimal outcomes. In the face of existing challenges, it is vital to develop an inclusive education system that responds to community needs, including relevant curriculum development and training for educators to enhance their skills in managing the learning process. Dong et al. (2023) indicate that technology usage, such as virtual reality, can improve teaching effectiveness and provide students with more engaging learning experiences. Consequently, integrating technology into education not only boosts academic outcomes but also helps shape students' character and social skills.

This leadership crisis is evident in the haphazard development of the curriculum. In an effort to boost student engagement, alternative subjects are often added without considering the needs and interests of the students. This oversight results in students feeling stressed and losing their motivation to learn. As noted by Di Pietro (2023), the consequences of this situation manifest as declining academic performance, particularly under unfavorable circumstances like the Covid-19 pandemic. To address these issues, school principals must assume a more proactive role as managers and supervisors. They should implement quality management practices by recognizing and rewarding teachers and educational staff who contribute positively to student development. This approach is anticipated to foster a more conducive and innovative learning environment. Additionally, integrating technology into education is crucial, as highlighted by Moraes et al. (2023), to enhance learning effectiveness and prepare students for challenges in the digital era.

Teachers, as one of the most critical human resources in the educational system, serve as both inspirators and motivators for students. They do not merely deliver lessons; they also shape character and ignite enthusiasm in students to pursue their aspirations. When a teacher

becomes a source of inspiration and motivation, it can significantly empower students to work harder toward achieving their dreams. For instance, a teacher who shares personal stories of struggle and success in their educational journey can encourage students to persevere despite facing various obstacles. In this context, it is essential to cultivate high-quality teachers who not only possess academic competencies but also exhibit strong interpersonal skills, enabling them to build positive relationships with their students (Taraza, Anastasiadou, Papademetriou & Masouras, 2024). Another crucial factor in enhancing the quality of education is motivation. Motivation acts as a driving force that elevates teacher performance. As explained by Sidharta and Rahmahwati (2024), motivation serves as a motivating factor that stimulates enthusiasm in individuals, encouraging them to collaborate and invest their efforts to achieve satisfaction. In the educational context, motivation can stem from various sources, both internal and external. For instance, internal motivation may arise from a teacher's desire for self-improvement and commitment to providing the best for their students, while external motivation can come from recognition and rewards given by the principal or educational institution.

In this regard, motivation is vital as it inspires teachers to work diligently and enthusiastically towards achieving desired outcomes. A study conducted by Abu Nasra and Arar (2020) illustrates a positive relationship between a principal's leadership style and teacher performance, with motivation acting as a mediating factor. When a principal adopts a supportive and empowering leadership style, teachers feel more motivated to contribute their best efforts. Therefore, it is essential for school principals to foster an environment that enhances teacher motivation through professional development, emotional support, and recognition of achievements (Sidharta, 2023).

Teacher performance encompasses the involvement of all school components, including teachers, principals, and students, aimed at improving the quality of learning. Strong performance is closely linked to the goals individuals or institutions aim to achieve in fulfilling their responsibilities. Consequently, teacher performance is influenced not only by individual abilities but also by effective organization and management of the educational process. In this context, principals play a pivotal role in creating a structure that promotes collaboration and effective communication among all parties within the school.

An effective organization and execution of educational management processes facilitate the achievement of educational goals. This includes clearly defining roles and responsibilities within the school environment. For example, a principal who can identify the strengths and weaknesses of each teacher and assign tasks accordingly will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching. Additionally, teachers' pedagogical, personal, professional, and social competencies play a crucial role in their performance. Research by Karim et al. (2023) emphasizes the importance of developing these competencies within the framework of managerial leadership in education, which ultimately impacts the quality of classroom learning.

In an increasingly complex and dynamic educational landscape, principals are required to possess adaptive leadership skills. Oliveira and Saraiva (2023) assert that in the context of Education 4.0, educational leaders must be capable of integrating technology and innovation into the learning process. This includes utilizing digital tools to support teacher professional development and enhance student learning experiences (Maqbool et al., 2024). By leveraging technology, principals can create a more interactive and engaging learning environment for students, thereby boosting their motivation and involvement in the learning process.

However, challenges in educational leadership extend beyond technology implementation to include the management of teachers' emotions. Özdemir et al. (2023) discovered that distributed leadership can aid in managing teachers' emotions by granting them autonomy to make decisions regarding teaching processes. When teachers feel in control of their instructional methods, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction and motivation to perform at their best. Therefore, it is essential for principals to foster a culture that encourages autonomy and collaboration among teachers. On the other hand, teacher performance is also influenced by external factors, such as educational policies and community support. Iqbal and Piwovar-Sulej (2022) describe how sustainable leadership in higher education institutions, which emphasizes social innovation, can foster an environment that supports teachers' professional development. This indicates that principals should develop partnerships with various stakeholders, including parents, the community, and other educational institutions, to create an ecosystem that enhances educational success.

Another factor affecting teacher job satisfaction is the availability of educational facilities and infrastructure. Schools require adequate resources and infrastructure to support the teaching and learning processes (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2020). Essential materials, such as comfortable classrooms, instructional aids, and technological facilities, play a critical role in enhancing learning activities. Schools with comprehensive facilities tend to foster a better learning atmosphere, leading to increased enthusiasm among teachers as they share knowledge with their students. However, many schools—especially in rural areas—lack sufficient resources, resulting in students possessing limited knowledge and teachers feeling stressed due to their inability to provide optimal instruction. For example, in some rural schools, insufficient access to information technology makes it challenging for teachers to deliver content relevant to current developments. In this context, Iqbal et al. (2023) highlight the importance of leadership styles that can cultivate a quality culture supportive of organizational performance. Therefore, principals need to take an active role in identifying and fulfilling the resource and infrastructure needs to enable teachers to work more effectively (Maqbool et al., 2024).

Additionally, it is important to recognize that teacher motivation is influenced not only by internal and external factors but also by the interpersonal relationships developed within the workplace. A positive relationship between the principal and teachers can foster a work environment where teachers feel valued and heard. According to research by Asghar et al. (2022), authentic leadership in education can enhance knowledge-sharing behavior among teachers, which can subsequently lead to improved performance and job satisfaction. A principal who establishes strong relationships with teachers will be more effective in motivating them to contribute their best efforts.

Delving deeper, it becomes clear that there is a strong connection between leadership, motivation, and job satisfaction. Principals who adopt appropriate leadership styles can enhance teacher motivation, which, in turn, affects their performance. For instance, when a principal acknowledges teachers' achievements or involves them in decision-making processes, it can heighten teachers' sense of ownership and commitment to the school. Daumiller et al. (2020) indicate that high motivation among faculty can result from recognition from leadership, suggesting that this principle also applies in the context of primary and secondary education. On the other hand, it is crucial to understand that overall

job satisfaction for teachers is also affected by the work environment. A supportive environment, both in terms of facilities and interpersonal relationships among colleagues, can boost teacher job satisfaction. Research by Li and Yao (2022) explains that high job satisfaction can reduce the intention to leave, which is a significant concern in the education sector. Therefore, principals must focus not only on their leadership style but also on creating a conducive work environment for teachers.

The literature emphasizes the need for effective leadership and robust motivation to cultivate a positive teaching environment. As indicated in the studies referenced, transformational leadership can foster job satisfaction, which in turn enhances performance (Alwali & Alwali, 2022). Furthermore, the positive effects of authentic leadership on knowledge-sharing behaviors can lead to improved performance in educational settings (Asghar et al., 2022). Providing adequate resources and fostering a supportive environment not only benefits teachers but also ultimately enhances student learning outcomes. By addressing these dimensions, educational institutions can implement strategies that bolster teacher performance and job satisfaction while contributing to overall academic success.

The problem statement for this research revolves around understanding how various factors influence teacher performance. Specifically, the study aims to investigate the impact of Leadership Style on teacher performance. This involves exploring whether different leadership approaches adopted within educational settings affect how well teachers perform their duties. In addition to examining Leadership Style, the research also seeks to assess the role of Motivation in enhancing teacher performance. This aspect focuses on understanding whether motivated teachers are more likely to achieve better performance outcomes in their classrooms and contribute to the overall educational environment. Moreover, the research will delve into the combined effect of Leadership Style and Motivation on teacher performance. It aims to uncover whether the interplay between the two factors creates a significant impact on how teachers engage with their responsibilities and deliver quality education.

By addressing these interconnected aspects, the research aspires to provide a comprehensive understanding of the influences on teacher performance. Ultimately, the findings could inform educational leaders and policymakers on the best strategies to

implement effective leadership practices and motivational programs that enhance the overall performance of teachers in schools.

METHOD

The research approach employed in this study is designed to facilitate the research process, ensuring its successful implementation. This study utilizes a quantitative research design. Quantitative research can be defined as a method based on positivist philosophy, aimed at investigating a specific population or sample. It involves data collection using research instruments and employs quantitative/statistical data analysis, with the objective of testing established hypotheses. This method is referred to as quantitative because the research data consists of numerical values and the analysis uses statistical techniques.

The population refers to the generalization area that encompasses subjects or objects possessing specific qualities and characteristics defined by the researcher for study, leading to subsequent conclusions. The researcher selected one high school in Medan as the study location. The population for this research includes all teachers and staff at this particular high school, totaling 47 individuals. Sampling refers to a subset of the population possessing certain characteristics. In this case, the sample is referred to as a saturated sample. Saturated sampling is a technique whereby all members of the population are included as samples. Therefore, the sample utilized in this study comprises the teachers and staff from this high school in Medan, which amounts to 47 individuals.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The validity test for the questionnaire in this study is a crucial step taken to ensure that the measurement tools used effectively represent the phenomena being investigated. In this context, the validity test was conducted with 47 respondents who represent a broader population. Utilizing SPSS as a data analysis tool enhances accuracy and efficiency in processing the results. With a systematic quantitative approach, the validity testing results

indicate that the variables of leadership, motivation, and teacher performance have calculated values greater than the table values, which is 0.2876.

Table 1 The Results of The Validity and Reliability Tests

Item	r	CA
L1	0.539	0.802
L2	0.610	
L3	0.680	
L4	0.398	
L5	0.534	
L6	0.612	
M1	0.609	0.818
M2	0.589	
M3	0.653	
M4	0.586	
M5	0.480	
M6	0.583	
P1	0.572	0.826
P2	0.605	
P3	0.780	
P4	0.510	
P5	0.664	
P6	0.471	

In-depth analysis of the teacher performance variables is also essential. Since the calculated values exceed the table value, all statements regarding teacher performance in the questionnaire are considered valid. Additionally, reliability is another critical aspect to consider. Reliability refers to the consistency of the results obtained from the measurement instrument. The reliability test results reveal that the Cronbach Alpha value for the leadership variable is 0.802, for motivation is 0.818, and for teacher performance is 0.826. These figures demonstrate that all variables possess a high level of reliability, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.6. This indicates that the instruments used are not only valid but also consistent in their measurements.

The normality test can be conducted to analyze whether the conditions for the regression equation are met by examining the p-plot, which indicates that the spread of data appears to be distributed around the diagonal line (not widely scattered away from the diagonal line). This result suggests that the data intended for regression in this study follows a normal

distribution. According to the results of the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality, the data is deemed normally distributed. The Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.200 indicates that this value is greater than the significance level of 0.05.

Moreover, the calculations reveal that the VIF (variance inflation factor) and tolerance values for all variables in this study do not exhibit multicollinearity. This is evidenced by the VIF values for both independent variables being below 10 and the tolerance values being above 0.01. The results further demonstrate that the plotted points are randomly scattered and do not form a specific pattern or trend line. From these findings, it can be concluded that this study does not experience heteroscedasticity; in other words, the variables being tested in this research are homoscedastic.

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis aim to determine the impact of two or more independent variables (X) on the dependent variable (Y). Based on the calculations, the multiple linear regression equation for this study is $Y = 5.517 + 0.513X_1 + 0.281X_2 + e$.

Table 2. The Regression Analysis Results, Including the ANOVA And Determination Coefficients

Variable	B	t	Sig.
a	5.517		
X1	0.513	3.758	0.001
X2	0.281	2.129	0.039
ANOVA		F=39.644	0.000
Model Summary	R=0.802	R Square=0.643	

From the regression equation, the constant value is 5.517. This numerical constant reflects the mathematical value of the independent variable when it is zero, influencing the dependent variable (teacher performance). The regression coefficient for b1, which is 0.513, indicates that a one-unit increase in leadership will enhance teacher performance by 0.513. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient for b2, at 0.281, implies that a one-unit increase in motivation will boost teacher performance by 0.281.

Hypothesis testing reveals that the significance value for the leadership variable (0.001) is less than the alpha level of 5% (0.05), or t calculated is 3.758, which is greater than t table value of 2.01537. Consequently, we reject H0 and accept Ha for the leadership variable, indicating that leadership has a significant effect on teacher performance.

Similarly, the significance value for the motivation variable (0.039) is lower than the alpha of 5% (0.05), or t calculated is 2.129, which surpasses the t table value of 2.01537.

Thus, we reject H_0 and accept H_a for the motivation variable, demonstrating that motivation also has a significant influence on teacher performance.

The regression analysis results in this study show a significance value of 0.000. This signifies that the F significance value must be less than 5% or 0.05, with the calculated F value at 39.644 exceeding the table F value of 3.21 ($df_1 = k - 1 = 3 - 1 = 2$) while ($df_2 = n - k = 47 - 3 = 44$). Therefore, we conclude that all independent variables, namely leadership and motivation, significantly affect teacher performance.

The coefficient of determination is 0.802, indicating that leadership and motivation collectively influence teacher performance. The R square value is 0.643 (64.3%), meaning that 64.3% of the variance in the independent variables, which are leadership and motivation, can explain the dependent variable of teacher performance, while the remaining 37.5% is affected by other variables outside the model. Other variables influencing teacher performance may include the environment, work stress, and others. The Standard Error of The Estimate, which measures prediction error, is equivalent to the standard deviation, which in this research is valued at 1.720. A smaller standard deviation indicates a better model fit.

The findings of this study reveal that the significance value for the leadership variable is 0.001, which is less than the alpha level of 5% (0.05), as evidenced by the calculated t value of 3.758 being greater than the table t value of 2.01537. Consequently, we reject H_0 and accept H_a , demonstrating that leadership significantly influences teacher performance in a partial manner.

Supporting this conclusion, Alwali and Alwali (2022) discuss the importance of transformational leadership in enhancing performance through emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Similarly, Maqbool et al. (2024) highlight how various leadership styles impact teaching effectiveness to sustain academic performance at the high school level. Furthermore, Iqbal et al. (2023) emphasize the connection between different leadership styles and organizational performance, with a focus on the mediating role of quality culture, reinforcing the notion that effective leadership plays a critical role in educational settings.

The results of this study indicate that the significance value for the motivation variable is 0.039, which is less than the alpha level of 5% (0.05), with a calculated t value of 2.129 exceeding the table t value of 2.01537. Therefore, we reject H_0 and accept H_a , confirming that motivation has a significant partial effect on teacher performance.

Further supporting these findings, Daumiller et al. (2020) explore various theoretical approaches and empirical evidence regarding the motivation of higher education faculty, highlighting its importance. Sidharta (2023) specifically addresses the effect of motivation on teacher performance, emphasizing the mediating role of knowledge sharing. Additionally, Zhang et al. (2024) conducted a meta-analysis on the influence of mentorship in the workplace on teachers' professional development, reinforcing the idea that motivation plays a pivotal role in enhancing teacher effectiveness in educational settings.

The findings of this study show a significance value of 0.000, indicating that the F significance value is less than 5% (0.05) or that the calculated F value of 39.644 is greater than the table F value of 3.21. This leads to the conclusion that all independent variables, specifically leadership and motivation, have a significant impact on teacher performance.

Supporting these results, Abu Nasra and Arar (2020) examine the relationship between leadership style and teacher performance, highlighting the mediating role of occupational perception. Daumiller et al. (2020) focus on motivation among higher education faculty, providing theoretical insights and empirical evidence on its influence. Additionally, Karim et al. (2023) conduct a systematic literature review on managerial leadership in education, reinforcing the importance of effective leadership. Furthermore, Özdemir et al. (2023) discuss distributed leadership and its connection to teachers' emotional labor, emphasizing the role of teacher autonomy as a mediating factor. Collectively, these studies underscore the vital roles that both leadership and motivation play in enhancing teacher performance within educational environments.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it is evident that leadership has a significant partial effect on teacher performance, as indicated by the calculated t value exceeding the table t value. Similarly, motivation also significantly influences teacher performance, with its t value being greater than the critical value, suggesting that when motivation increases, teacher performance similarly improves. Furthermore, both leadership and motivation collectively have a significant effect on teacher performance, as demonstrated by the F value being greater than the table F value. The coefficient of determination indicates a meaningful relationship between leadership, motivation, and teacher performance.

For future research, it is recommended to explore additional variables that may affect teacher performance, such as work environment, teacher training, and student engagement. Investigating these factors can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the elements that contribute to effective teaching. Additionally, longitudinal studies could be beneficial in assessing the long-term impacts of leadership styles and motivational strategies on teacher performance. Incorporating qualitative approaches, such as interviews or focus groups, may also enrich the data by capturing the personal experiences of teachers regarding their motivation and leadership they receive. These directions will ultimately contribute to enhancing educational practices and outcomes.

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