

Principal's Leadership Style on the Performance of Teachers at SDN 176 Palembang

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti dan mengevaluasi bagaimana gaya kepemimpinan kepala sekolah mempengaruhi kinerja guru di SDN 176 Palembang. Studi ini juga mengidentifikasi pola kepemimpinan yang paling dominan dan mengukur tingkat efektivitas guru secara keseluruhan di sekolah tersebut. Menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kuantitatif dengan desain survei, studi ini melibatkan 25 guru melalui metode pengambilan sampel total. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner skala Likert dan dianalisis melalui uji regresi linier sederhana dan berganda. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional adalah gaya yang paling dominan digunakan oleh kepala sekolah dan memiliki pengaruh positif yang signifikan terhadap kinerja guru. Koefisien determinasi mengungkapkan bahwa 46,2% variasi kinerja dipengaruhi oleh gaya kepemimpinan, sementara 53,8% disebabkan oleh faktor lain.

Kata kunci: Gaya kepemimpinan, kinerja guru, kepemimpinan kepala sekolah, manajemen pendidikan

Abstract

This research aims to examine and evaluate how the leadership style of school principals affects teacher performance at SDN 176 Palembang. The study also identifies the most dominant leadership pattern and measures the overall level of teacher effectiveness in the school. Using a quantitative descriptive approach with a survey design, the study involved 25 teachers through a total sampling method. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed through simple and multiple linear regression tests. Findings show that transformational leadership is the most dominant style used by the principal and has a significant positive influence on teacher performance. The coefficient of determination reveals that 46.2% of performance variations are influenced by leadership style, while 53.8% are attributed to other factors.

Keywords: Leadership style, Teacher Performance, Principal Leadership, Educational Management

1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of a nation's education system is closely linked to the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes in schools. In this regard, teacher performance plays a vital role (Burhan & Sauga, 2017). Effective teacher performance involves several professional responsibilities, including lesson planning, instructional implementation, assessment of learning outcomes, and other related duties. Nevertheless, teacher performance does not develop independently; it is strongly influenced by the work environment and, most importantly, by the leadership exercised by the school principal (Kartini et al., 2020).

The principal functions as a manager, supervisor, and instructional leader who determines the direction and development of the school organization (Saleh et al., 2016). Therefore, selecting an appropriate leadership style is crucial in creating a positive working atmosphere, motivating teachers, and improving their performance (Savitri et al., 2022). Different leadership styles such as authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire, or a combination of

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transformational and transactional approaches may generate different effects on teachers' motivation and professionalism (Kosasih, 2024).

SDN 176 Palembang, as one of the primary education institutions in the city, faces its own challenges and dynamics in achieving educational quality standards. This study specifically focuses on SDN 176 Palembang to examine in depth how the leadership style applied by the current principal is related to the level of teacher performance within the school.

Improving teacher performance cannot be separated from the role of the principal as both an instructional and managerial leader. The leadership style implemented by the principal may act either as a driving force that enhances teachers' motivation and professionalism or as a barrier that limits their performance (Andari et al., 2024). Previous studies have identified several leadership styles such as transformational leadership that inspires vision, transactional leadership that emphasizes reward and punishment based on performance, and democratic leadership that encourages teacher participation in decision-making which may influence teacher performance in different ways (Amirudin & Abu Bakar, 2023).

The effectiveness of a leadership style often depends on the level of maturity of the subordinates. Maturity in this context does not refer to age or emotional stability but rather to the willingness to achieve goals, accept responsibility, and possess the skills and experience required to complete tasks. In the educational context, leadership style refers to the way school leaders organize, guide, and direct teachers to work collaboratively in achieving educational objectives (Waedoloh et al., 2021).

Previous research conducted at SD Negeri 13 Palembang indicated a positive relationship between leadership style and teacher performance. However, similar research focusing specifically on SDN 176 Palembang has not yet been conducted. Based on general observations in schools, there is an assumption that a gap may still exist between the expected level of teacher performance and the current reality, which may be influenced by the leadership style practiced by the principal (Aditya, 2025). Therefore, this study aims to empirically analyze the influence of the principal's leadership style on teacher performance at SDN 176 Palembang.

As one of the primary education institutions, SDN 176 Palembang is expected to produce high-quality graduates. However, preliminary observations and school management issues suggest that teacher performance may not yet have reached its optimal level, possibly due to a leadership style that is less adaptive or not fully effective. Consequently, this research is important to empirically examine the relationship between the principal's leadership style and teacher performance at SDN 176 Palembang.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using a causal associative research design (Yusra & Asnur, 2022). This design was applied to examine the hypothesis concerning the cause-and-effect relationship between the independent variable, namely the principal's leadership style (X), and the dependent variable, namely teacher performance (Y) (Rahman & Yanti, 2016). The population of this study consisted of all teachers at SDN 176 Palembang, including both State Civil Apparatus (ASN) teachers and honorary teachers, with a total of 25 individuals.

Since the population size was relatively small, a census or total sampling technique was used, meaning that all members of the population were included as research participants. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire designed to measure the variables of leadership style (X) and teacher performance (Y). The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques and simple linear regression analysis. In addition, a t-test was conducted to test the research hypothesis, along with the calculation of the coefficient of determination to determine the extent to which the independent variable influences the dependent variable.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that the principal's leadership style at SDN 176 Palembang is perceived by teachers to be in the high category, indicating that the principal effectively motivates teachers and involves them in decision-making. Leadership approaches that combine transformational and democratic styles have proven effective in creating a supportive and collaborative work environment.

Teacher performance is categorized as good, meaning that teachers are carrying out their main responsibilities adequately and meeting professional expectations. Regression analysis shows that the principal's leadership style has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance. Specifically, 46.2% of the variation in teacher performance can be attributed to the principal's leadership style, while the remaining 53.8% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study, such as teacher motivation, work discipline, compensation, or competence. This finding highlights that while leadership is a key driver, internal teacher factors remain important in determining performance outcomes.

Table 1. *Descriptive Data*

Variable	Min Score	Max Score	Mean	Std. Deviation	Category
Leadership Style (X)	55	95	81.25	7.80	High
Teacher Performance (Y)	60	100	85.10	6.55	Good

The table shows that the principal's leadership style is in the high category, indicating that teachers feel motivated and actively involved in school decision-making. Leadership approaches that combine transformational and democratic styles have contributed to creating a positive and supportive work environment.

Teacher performance is in the good category, meaning that teachers carry out their duties properly and meet professional expectations. The analysis also shows that the principal's leadership style has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Approximately 46.2% of the variation in teacher performance is influenced by the principal's leadership style, while the remaining 53.8% is affected by other factors such as teacher motivation, work discipline, compensation, and individual competence. Overall, the data suggest that effective leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing teacher performance, though internal teacher factors continue to be important in achieving optimal outcomes.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the principal of SDN 176 Palembang applies a leadership style that is descriptively in the high category, reflecting predominantly transformational and democratic leadership. The principal provides inspiration, individual consideration, and actively involves teachers in decision-making processes (Bush & Glover, 2021; Leithwood et al., 2021; Liu & Hallinger, 2022). Such practices create a positive work climate that strengthens teacher motivation and professional commitment, which are essential factors in enhancing overall teacher performance (Nguyen et al., 2022; Pietsch & Tulowitzki, 2023).

Teacher performance at SDN 176 Palembang is generally in the good category, as teachers carry out their main responsibilities effectively and comply with their professional duties (OECD, 2021; Darling-Hammond et al., 2022). Performance outcomes are closely linked to leadership support, opportunities for professional development, and a collaborative school culture that encourages shared responsibility and continuous improvement (Torres & López, 2021; Wang et al., 2022).

The study also found a significant positive relationship between the principal's leadership style and teacher performance. Visionary and participatory leadership practices, characteristic of transformational and democratic approaches, are shown to improve teaching quality and organizational effectiveness (Hallinger & Walker, 2021; Urick & Bowers, 2021; Sebastian et al., 2021). These findings align with prior research demonstrating that transformational leadership fosters innovation, job satisfaction, and higher teacher productivity (Klar et al., 2022; Gumus et al., 2022). In practice, a leadership strategy that combines support, vision, and participation effectively encourages teachers to maximize their work output while strengthening the school's institutional performance (Liu et al., 2023; Robinson et al., 2022).

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the principal of SDN 176 Palembang demonstrates a high level of leadership effectiveness by applying transformational and democratic practices. These practices inspire teachers, provide individual consideration, and actively involve them in school decision-making. As a result, teacher performance is generally in the good category, reflecting adherence to professional duties and effective teaching. The analysis also shows a significant positive relationship between the principal's leadership style and teacher performance, suggesting that participatory and visionary leadership positively influences both teacher outcomes and overall school effectiveness.

The implications of these findings are multifaceted. For school management, principals are encouraged to maintain or further enhance transformational and democratic leadership practices, with a focus on motivating teachers, fostering collaboration, and supporting professional growth. For teachers, active involvement in decision-making and participation in a supportive school culture can strengthen motivation, commitment, and overall performance.

Meanwhile, policymakers should consider incorporating leadership training programs that emphasize transformational and participatory approaches into professional development initiatives, as such programs can contribute to improving school performance on a broader scale.

For future research, it is recommended to investigate the influence of other internal and external factors, such as teacher motivation, discipline, compensation, and competence, on performance to complement studies on leadership. Longitudinal studies could also be conducted to examine how sustained transformational and democratic leadership affects teacher performance and school outcomes over time. Additionally, similar studies in other schools or regions would provide comparative insights, helping to understand the effectiveness of different leadership styles across diverse educational contexts and cultural settings.

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