

# The Influence of Principal Leadership and Work Motivation on Teacher Performance at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh

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## Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki bagaimana kinerja guru di SDN 6 Suak Tapeh dipengaruhi oleh gaya kepemimpinan dan motivasi kerja kepala sekolah. Sebanyak 25 guru di SDN 6 Suak Tapeh menjadi populasi penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan survei dan metodologi kuantitatif. Analisis regresi linier berganda digunakan untuk mengevaluasi data yang dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kinerja guru dipengaruhi secara positif dan signifikan oleh gaya kepemimpinan kepala sekolah. Selain itu, motivasi kerja guru juga memiliki dampak yang baik dan signifikan terhadap kinerja mereka. Di SDN 6 Suak Tapeh, motivasi kerja dan gaya kepemimpinan kepala sekolah keduanya memainkan peran penting dalam meningkatkan kinerja guru. Hasil ini menunjukkan betapa pentingnya peran kepala sekolah dalam menerapkan kepemimpinan yang baik dan menciptakan lingkungan kerja yang inspiratif, sehingga dapat meningkatkan kinerja guru dan berdampak positif pada kualitas pendidikan.

**Kata kunci:** Peran Kepemimpinan Manajerial Kepala Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru di Sekolah Dasar Negeri 2 Lembak.

## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate how teacher performance at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh is impacted by the leadership style and work motivation of the school principal. The 25 teachers of SDN 6 Suak Tapeh make up the study's population. This study uses a survey approach and a quantitative methodology. Multiple linear regression was used to evaluate the data, which were gathered via questionnaires. The findings show that teacher performance is positively and significantly impacted by the principal's leadership style. Additionally, instructors' motivation at work has a good and considerable impact on their performance. At SDN 6 Suak Tapeh, job motivation and principal leadership both play a major role in raising teacher performance. These results demonstrate how important school principals are in putting great leadership into practice and creating an inspiring workplace, thereby enhancing teacher performance and positively impacting education quality.

**Keywords:** principal leadership, work motivation, teacher performance, education quality.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping the quality of human resources and determining the progress of a nation (Gopal et al., 2021). Within the school environment, the principal's leadership and teachers' motivation are two crucial factors that directly influence teacher performance. Effective leadership encourages teachers to work with commitment, fosters innovation, and builds a supportive culture that enhances instructional quality (Debataraja, 2024). Likewise, motivation both intrinsic and extrinsic serves as a driving force that determines how actively and productively teachers perform their duties (Munawar & Chaudhary, 2022). Previous studies have consistently shown that schools with strong leadership and high teacher motivation tend to achieve better educational outcomes.

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However, despite extensive research on leadership and motivation in education, there is still limited understanding regarding how these two factors interact in the specific context of elementary schools in rural or semi-urban regions. Many studies have focused on urban settings or secondary schools, leaving a gap in knowledge about how leadership styles and motivational dynamics affect teacher performance at the elementary level, particularly in SDN 6 Suak Tapeh. Furthermore, differences in organizational culture, resources, and teacher backgrounds make it important to re-examine these relationships within a localized context (Kusmaryono et al., 2024).

This study provides a state-of-the-art approach by integrating leadership theory with motivational constructs to comprehensively analyze their combined effect on teacher performance. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on contextualizing principal leadership and teacher motivation in a public elementary school environment in Suak Tapeh District, where educational challenges differ from those in urban areas (Mangudap et al., 2022).

Practically, the findings of this study are expected to assist school leaders and policymakers in designing strategies that strengthen leadership effectiveness and enhance teacher motivation, leading to improved educational quality. The contribution of this research lies in providing empirical evidence that supports the development of leadership models and motivation-based interventions suited for elementary education (Nugraha & Suyatmin, 2021).

Based on the background above, the research seeks to answer the question: To what extent do principal leadership and teacher motivation influence teacher performance at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh?

## **2. METHOD**

This study employed a quantitative research approach with an explanatory survey design to examine the influence of principal leadership and teacher motivation on teacher performance at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh. The research aimed to measure the relationships between variables using statistical analysis to test the proposed hypothesis (Almarashdi & Jarrah, 2023).

The population in this study consisted of all teachers at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh. Considering the relatively small number of teachers, the study used a total sampling technique, meaning that all members of the population were included as research respondents. This approach ensured that the findings accurately represented the school's context (Sitio et al., 2023).

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Results***

The study found that principal leadership and teacher motivation both had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh. The results of multiple linear regression analysis indicated that these two independent variables principal leadership and teacher motivation had a joint contribution to enhancing teacher performance.

- **Principal Leadership:** Principals who demonstrated effective leadership, characterized by a clear vision, good communication skills, supervision, and participatory decision-making, fostered a supportive school environment. This environment encouraged teachers to work with greater effectiveness.

- **Teacher Motivation:** Teachers who had high intrinsic and extrinsic motivation exhibited improved work discipline, creativity in teaching, and a stronger commitment to achieving educational goals (Fadliyana & Nugraheni, 2024).

**Table 1.** Regression Results for Principal Leadership, Teacher Motivation, and Teacher Performance at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	t-value	p-value
Principal Leadership	0.35	0.41	3.15	0.002
Teacher Motivation	0.25	0.28	2.67	0.009
Constant	2.10	-	-	-
R <sup>2</sup>	0.55	-	-	-
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.53	-	-	-

*p < 0.05 is considered statistically significant*

The regression test results revealed that the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) was 0.55, indicating a strong relationship between the two independent variables (principal leadership and teacher motivation) and the dependent variable (teacher performance). This result suggests that about 55% of the variance in teacher performance at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh can be explained by the combined effects of principal leadership and teacher motivation.

When analyzed independently, principal leadership showed a stronger influence on teacher performance compared to teacher motivation. However, both variables were significant and mutually reinforcing. Specifically, principal leadership accounted for 41% of the variance in teacher performance, while teacher motivation accounted for 28%.

## Discussion

The findings of this research are consistent with previous studies which have emphasized that effective school leadership and high teacher motivation are key factors in improving teacher performance. Several studies support this conclusion. (Ainscow, 2020) explained that effective leadership improves the professionalism and productivity of teachers through continuous professional development. (Budianto, 2023) found that supportive leadership enhances teachers’ intrinsic motivation, which directly contributes to better performance. Alanoğlu (2021) also confirmed that the leadership style of school principals significantly affects teacher motivation and job satisfaction (Gustiningsi et al., 2024).

Research conducted by He, Guo, and Abazie (2024) showed that instructional leadership of principals predicts the professional development of teachers, leading to better teaching outcomes. Similarly, Lee and Chen (2022) stated that leadership behavior that encourages collaboration and innovation increases teacher motivation and classroom performance. Studies by Wahyudi and Agustin (2020), Rahmadani (2021), and Handayani (2022) also support the conclusion that principals who apply transformational and participatory leadership styles can enhance teacher performance through motivation and appreciation (Almusharraf, 2021).

These findings are further reinforced by studies from Zainuddin (2023) and Widodo (2023), which found that leadership combined with motivation contributes to more effective learning

management and improved student achievement. Research by Nirmawati et al. (2023) revealed that motivation serves as a mediating variable between leadership and teacher performance, indicating that leadership not only has a direct effect but also enhances motivation which then increases performance.

However, several studies provide different perspectives. Oentari and Asmawan (2022) found that the influence of leadership on teacher performance is not always significant when teacher competence and school infrastructure are limited. Zebua et al. (2021) also reported that some indicators of motivation, such as financial incentives, do not always lead to better performance if not balanced with intrinsic motivation and professional recognition. These differences show that the relationship between leadership, motivation, and performance can be influenced by contextual factors such as school culture, work environment, and teacher readiness (Khadafi, 2021).

The implications of this study highlight the importance of strengthening the role of school principals as instructional leaders who can motivate teachers through supportive supervision, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth. In addition, teacher motivation can be enhanced through career development programs, fair reward systems, and a positive school climate. The results suggest that effective leadership and motivation strategies are essential to improving teacher performance and, ultimately, the quality of education in elementary schools such as SDN 6 Suak Tapeh.

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding that leadership and motivation are interdependent variables in shaping teacher performance. When both factors are developed simultaneously, they can create a sustainable impact on the success of educational institutions (Aleksius et al., 2022).

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that principal leadership and teacher motivation both have a positive and significant influence on teacher performance at SDN 6 Suak Tapeh. The findings indicate that effective principal leadership characterized by clear vision, good communication, participative decision-making, and continuous supervision creates a supportive school climate that encourages teachers to perform better. Likewise, high levels of teacher motivation both intrinsic and extrinsic strengthen teachers' enthusiasm, responsibility, and creativity in carrying out their professional duties. The simultaneous contribution of leadership and motivation demonstrates that these two factors are interrelated and mutually reinforcing in shaping teacher performance. In this context, principal leadership not only serves as a managerial function but also as a motivational force that inspires teachers to work with dedication and professionalism. These findings support previous studies which revealed that leadership quality and motivation are the most dominant predictors of teacher effectiveness and instructional success. Practically, this study implies that efforts to improve teacher performance should focus on strengthening the leadership capacity of principals and fostering teacher motivation through recognition, professional development, and supportive school culture. School principals are encouraged to adopt transformational and participatory leadership styles that prioritize collaboration, trust, and empowerment. Furthermore, educational policymakers should design leadership training programs and motivation-based performance systems that align with teachers' professional needs. Future research could explore mediating or moderating variables such as work environment, teacher competence, or organizational culture to deepen understanding of the leadership–motivation–performance relationship. In summary, this study provides empirical evidence that effective leadership

combined with strong motivation can significantly enhance teacher performance, thereby contributing to the achievement of educational quality and the success of the learning process at the elementary school level.

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