

# The Influence of Principal Leadership on Elementary School Teacher Performance

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**Abstract:** The principal's leadership has received complaints from teachers, especially regarding the lack of supervision of teachers' actions while on duty. The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of principal leadership on the performance of elementary school teachers in the Korwil District of Kudus City. Principal leadership is the ability to lead and convince subordinates so that subordinates have sincerity in working and have high motivation in carrying out their duties at school. This research is a quantitative study with a survey method. The population in this study was 263 elementary school civil servant teachers throughout the Korwil District of Kudus City. The number of samples determined was 159 people calculated using the Slovin formula. The data collection technique used a test technique, namely a questionnaire with a questionnaire guide instrument. The data analysis technique used prerequisite tests and hypothesis tests. The results of the study showed that there was an influence of principal leadership on teacher performance, the results of the T test showed that the sig value was 0.003 < 0.05, meaning there was an influence of principal leadership on teacher performance. In conclusion, there was an influence of principal leadership on teacher performance.

**Keywords:** Principal Leadership, Teacher Performance, Elementary School

## 1. Introduction

Education is a planned effort to influence others, whether individuals, groups, or communities, to do what is expected by educational practitioners (Murkatik et al., 2020). Education has a strategic role and function in fostering children's creativity (Lian et al., 2018). Quality education will be achieved in various ways, including the principal's role as the bearer of the highest policy authority and the driving force behind all school components. As the organizational leader, the principal holds full responsibility for the success and quality of all school components. The principal plays a crucial role that can impact the school organization, one of which is serving as a driver, with the principal fully responsible for improving teacher performance and quality (Kaiman et al., 2020). Furthermore, more broadly, the principal is responsible for the educational delivery process, which includes the school itself, in terms of teacher development and infrastructure.

The principal acts as the implementer of autonomy in educational institutions, with the primary task of supporting the government in achieving the Educational Goals as stipulated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Given their significant responsibilities, a principal must possess the personality and leadership qualities to lead while simultaneously caring for school resources, including teachers, so that their performance is consistently maintained and even improved. In reality, principals' leadership often simply follows orders from above without considering the relevance and needs of the school being developed, leading to the conclusion that they lack initiative in developing school development programs (Ndoen & Manurung, 2021).

The Kudus City District Regional Coordinator (Korwil) has 36 public schools and approximately 263 civil servant (PNS) teachers. Of these 263 teachers, 60.8%, or 160, are certified, while 103, or 39.2%, are uncertified, although some are currently undergoing professional teacher education. The professionalism of teachers in public elementary schools throughout the Kudus City District Regional Coordinator appears to be low in carrying out their duties as educators. School supervisory data at the end of the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year showed that only 120 teachers (45.62%) had prepared learning materials such as annual programs, semester programs, teaching modules, ATP (Analytical Learning Outcomes), evaluation programs, class lists, grade lists, and so on.

During the implementation of learning, data from the principal's supervision showed that 104 teachers (39.54%) arrived to class between 5 and 10 minutes late. Time allocations often did not align with the teaching modules, and the learning models and methods used lacked variety. Fifty-five teachers still predominantly used the lecture method, and students were not encouraged to actively seek information on their own, but instead simply received material from the teacher. In learning evaluations, only 70 teachers (26.61%) prepared questions using a grid beforehand. Following evaluations, teachers rarely followed up, with only 38 teachers (14.44%) creating improvement and enrichment programs. Enrichment programs often consisted of homework assignments from the Student Worksheet (LKS) book, without referring to the evaluation results.

Teachers in the Kota District Coordinator are also less active in improving their competencies through self-development activities. During the 2024/2025 academic year, only 120 teachers (45.62%) participated in functional training, despite numerous online training programs available through the Merdeka Mengajar Platform. Only 90 teachers (34.22%) utilized the platform to improve their competencies.

Based on preliminary data collected from one teacher in the Kota District Coordinator and the school principal, it emerged that the principal's leadership has been the subject of complaints from teachers, particularly regarding the lack of supervision of teacher actions while on duty. The principal only involves a select number of teachers in each policy, leaving other teachers feeling uninvolved. Furthermore, the lack of communication from the principal regarding work mechanisms has led to teachers carrying out their duties according to their own perceptions. Teacher performance has also been seen as low in terms of understanding their duties and program implementation, making it difficult to achieve expected educational goals. Based on the author's observations regarding the performance of elementary school teachers throughout the Kota District Coordinator, it was found that some teachers are still not performing their duties effectively. Some teachers are known to arrive late and leave early, due to a lack of attention or firm action from their superiors regarding these violations. This situation also results in decreased motivation among teachers who strive to comply with existing norms.

Achieving expected teacher performance requires a professional principal. As part of the school system, the principal holds a strategic position in directing and supporting teacher activities in student learning. Teacher performance is a crucial aspect in achieving educational goals, as teachers are at the forefront of the education system. High and low teacher performance quality impacts student learning outcomes in schools. A teacher's performance cannot be isolated from intrinsic competency; it must be mastered (Kanya et al., 2021). Teachers must be able to continuously improve their performance, which is crucial for educational success. Professional teachers are considered capable of encouraging students to think, react, and act creatively (Fransiska et al., 2020). Professional teachers have a social responsibility, demonstrated by their competence in social contexts and strong interaction skills.

Current low teacher performance is characterized by teaching that does not align with their competencies, overlapping work schedules, and unclear task structures. A teacher must possess special skills, capable of transforming information and learning to students. While teachers are not the sole source of information in the classroom, students must be given opportunities to develop themselves. Teacher performance is a crucial factor in improving student quality, but it is heavily influenced by various factors, both internal and external.

## 1.1 Conceptual framework

Regarding the factors influencing teacher teaching performance, as previously explained, numerous studies have proven this theory. (Irawanty & Mulyanto, 2024) explained that their research results showed that school leadership, teacher professionalism, and work discipline simultaneously influence teacher performance. Furthermore, (Kaiman et al., 2020) revealed that teacher success in implementing the learning process is influenced by (a) teacher ability and high enthusiasm; (b) regular coaching provided by the principal, both through school meetings and Teacher Working Group (KKG) meetings in clusters; (c) the principal's ability to supervise and control the implementation of learning through class visits and group discussions; and (d) the principal's success in creating a conducive school climate and culture, both in terms of the physical condition of the school and a pleasant socio-emotional environment, so that teachers are more enthusiastic in carrying out the learning process.

Meanwhile, (Ivan Fanani Qomusuddin & Ubun Bunyamin, 2020) stated that the high performance of public high school teachers in Rembang Regency is inseparable from the role of the principal's leadership. The data shows that principal leadership is classified as very high, with an average score of 87.50. There are five components of principal leadership: personality, knowledge, understanding of the school's vision and mission, decision-making ability, and communication skills. Of these five components, the highest average score is communication skills, reaching 90.06.

As part of the school system, the principal occupies a strategic position in directing and supporting teacher activities in student learning. Teacher performance is a crucial aspect in achieving educational goals, as teachers are at the forefront of the education system. High and low teacher performance quality impacts student learning outcomes at school. There are indications that high teacher performance is inextricably linked to the principal's role in maintaining communication. The principal's communication motivates teachers in carrying out their duties. The principal's ability to make wise decisions impacts a more conducive school climate and conditions, thus influencing teacher performance. A principal's understanding of the school's vision and mission influences how they act to realize those visions and missions,

thus influencing the rhythm of work, including teacher performance. Equally important, the principal's personality and knowledge influence teacher performance. A principal with a positive personality creates a positive atmosphere within the school, making it more comfortable. This directly impacts teacher performance, as it motivates them to perform their duties effectively.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Research design

This research is quantitative descriptive, aiming to explain the position of the variables studied and the relationships between them. The method used in this study is a survey. Surveys are data collection techniques that involve asking respondents questions. Explanatory research is a research method that aims to explain the position of the variables studied and the influence of one variable on another.

### 2.2 Respondents of the study

The population in this study was all 263 civil servant elementary school teachers in the Kudus City District Coordination Area. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula. Based on the existing population of 263 people, where the entire population is representative and deemed by the researcher to have the appropriate criteria  $n = 158,72$  or rounded to 159. Based on the calculation above, the sample size was set at 159 people. Researchers need to obtain correct and accurate data using several data collection instruments. The data collection instruments used in this study were non-test techniques. The non-test techniques used in this study were questionnaires and documentation. The instrument used was a questionnaire guide.

**Tabel 1** General Grid of Research Instruments

Variable	Indicator
Principal Leadership	The initiator of innovation (agent of innovation) in KMB
	Updates in teacher development
	Updates in Extracurricular activities
	Exploring resources with the school committee
	Partnership cooperation
	Exemplary behavior
	Democratic and transparent.
	Arrangement of the work environment.
	Conducive working atmosphere
	Award Ceremony
	Implementation of sanctions
	Developing a teaching supervision program
	Implementing teaching supervision programs
	Utilizing the results of teaching supervision

## 3. Findings and Discussions

The research results described in this chapter are oriented toward the research objective outlined above, namely to analyze the influence of principal leadership. The quantitative data obtained from the study were then analyzed to obtain hypothesis testing results. Before testing the hypotheses, prerequisite tests were required. The prerequisite test in this study was the normality test. The normality test in this study was conducted using Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 25 software. The results of the normality test are shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Normality Test

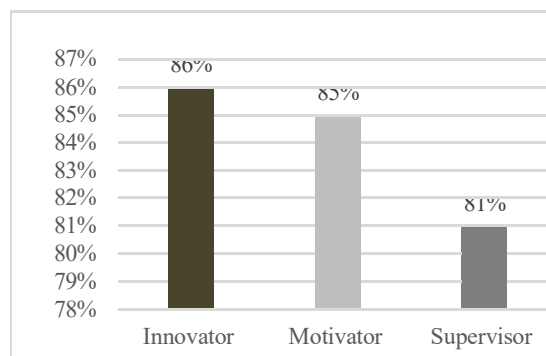
		Unstandardized Residual
N		159
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	3.55798489
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.073

	Positive	.068
	Negative	-.073
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.186
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.120
a. Test distribution is Normal.		
b. Calculated from data.		

Based on the normality test table, it can be seen that the questionnaire results have a normality test Sig value of 0.120, which is greater than the value of  $\alpha = 0.05$ . This indicates that the research data is normally distributed or H0 is accepted.

### 3.1 The Influence of Principal Leadership on Elementary School Teacher Performance in the Kudus City District Coordination Office

The hypothesis was tested by analyzing the influence of principal leadership on teacher performance. The results of the principal leadership questionnaire on teacher performance are presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The Influence of Principal Leadership on Teacher Performance

Figure 1 shows that the principal, as an innovator, has a significant influence on teacher performance, at 86%. This indicates that teacher performance will improve if the principal demonstrates good leadership, capable of guiding, directing, and providing support to teachers in carrying out their work.

To answer the first hypothesis, a T-test was used to examine the effect of each independent variable partially on the dependent variable. The results of the T-test conducted to determine the effect of principal leadership on teacher performance are presented in Table 3

**Tabel 3.** Linear Regression T Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	42.722	2.763		15.464	.000
	Leadership (X1)	.048	.029	-.087	1.669	.003

The T-test results show a significant value of  $0.003 < 0.05$ , indicating that the principal's leadership influences teacher performance. To fulfill their role and function as innovators, principals must have appropriate strategies for fostering harmonious relationships with their environment, seeking new ideas, integrating all activities, setting an example for all educational staff at the school, and developing innovative learning models. As innovators, principals must be able to seek, identify, and implement various innovations at school. They must be able to optimally utilize available resources. As educational leaders, principals must be able to coordinate and mobilize human potential to achieve educational goals, particularly by guiding educators in implementing educational and learning activities at school.

Educational success in schools is largely determined by the principal's ability to manage the available educational staff. The principal is one of the educational components that influences teacher performance. The principal is responsible for organizing educational activities, school administration, developing other educational staff, and utilizing and maintaining facilities and infrastructure. This becomes even more crucial as the demands of principals' responsibilities become increasingly complex, requiring more effective and efficient performance support (Armiyanti et al., 2023).

Teacher teaching performance is essentially the performance demonstrated by teachers in carrying out their duties as educators. The quality of teacher teaching performance significantly determines the quality of educational outcomes, as teachers are the ones with the most direct contact with students in school education/learning. Teaching performance is considered high quality when a teacher demonstrates good behavior in their teaching efforts. Several factors influence teacher performance, including principal leadership, organizational culture, and work motivation (Sudarti et al., 2024).

Principals generally have three functions: innovator, motivator, and supervisor. The principal's innovator function in this study includes initiating innovation (agent of innovation) in teaching and learning activities, innovation in teacher development, innovation in extracurricular activities, and exploring resources with the school committee. The motivator's function includes partnerships, role models, democracy and transparency, work environment management, a conducive work atmosphere, awards, and sanctions. As a supervisor, the principal develops teaching supervision programs, implements them, and utilizes the results of teaching supervision.

The hypothesis in this study is the influence of principal leadership on teacher performance. Based on the results obtained from 159 respondents consisting of civil servant teachers from all over the Kota District, 86% of teachers answered that the principal's leadership in the innovation dimension significantly influences teacher performance. The motivator function achieved a percentage of 85%, indicating that the principal's leadership in the motivational function significantly influences teacher performance. The supervisor function achieved a percentage of 81%, indicating that the principal's leadership influences teacher performance. The T-test results showed a significant value of  $0.003 < 0.05$ , indicating that principal leadership influences teacher performance.

Effective principal leadership will influence the participation of subordinates in carrying out their responsibilities with a sense of satisfaction and can work appropriately. This includes providing a vision, creating a big picture, setting clear and mutually agreed-upon goals, monitoring and analyzing performance, and developing the performance of their followers by providing direction and guidance, training, mentoring, and providing feedback. Good leadership will build teacher motivation. Efforts to maintain harmony, teacher well-being, and adapt to the situations and conditions of subordinates. One of the strengths in managing a school organization and those responsible for addressing change is the principal's leadership behavior. As a leader, the principal must be able to initiate new thinking in the interaction process within the school environment. Thus, the principal's leadership behavior will significantly impact the school's progress. A principal's leadership must possess high integrity, as a leader will always be among the members of the organization they lead. (Sahadi et al., 2021) explain that principal leadership in increasing opportunities and encouraging components to achieve goals can be realized through the principal's actions, including friendship, closeness, and full consideration for teachers, both as individuals and as a group. The principal's positive behavior can encourage, direct, and motivate all school members to work together to realize the school's vision, mission, and goals. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by (Yunus et al., 2021) which shows that the leadership of the principal of SD Negeri Ngagel I/394 Surabaya is 58.8% in the moderate category and the performance of teachers at SD Negeri Ngagel I/394 Surabaya is 52.9% in the moderate category. Meanwhile, based on a simple regression analysis, the regression value of the t-count value is 5.806 and the distribution table is searched with a significance level of 0.05 through a two-sided test for degrees of freedom (df)  $n-k-1 = 17-2-1 = 14$ , then the t-table is 2.145. So it can be seen that  $5.806 > 2.145$ . Thus,  $H_a$  is accepted, while  $H_0$  is rejected. So it is concluded that there is a significant influence between principal leadership and teacher performance. In line with the research results from (Asvio et al., 2019) that the correlation between the principal's leadership style and teacher performance obtained in this study shows its significance, both through product moment correlation and partial correlation.

This is in line with research findings (Hidayat, 2022), which show that the principal's leadership variable influences teacher performance. The principal's leadership influence on teacher performance is 62.83%. As a leader, the principal must possess the skills to influence, encourage, guide, direct, and mobilize others related to the implementation and development of education, teaching, and training so that all activities can run effectively and efficiently, which in turn will achieve the established educational and teaching goals. This is supported by research findings (Nasution & Ichsan, 2020), which show the extent of the independent variable's individual influence on the dependent variable. The results of this study indicate that the independent variable, leadership style, has an individual influence on the dependent variable, teacher performance at SMP Yayasan Perguruan Letjen S. Parman Medan. Since  $t\text{-test} > t\text{-table}$  ( $5.458 > 2.069$ ),  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Principal's Leadership Style has a significant influence on Teacher Performance.

This analysis indicates that the principal's leadership style is a key factor contributing to teacher performance. These results also indicate that increasing the effectiveness of the principal's leadership style will significantly contribute to teacher performance. The principal's role as a leader is key to school improvement and

development. Performance improvement can be achieved if the principal, as a leader, is able to guide and foster the school community, especially teachers, as teachers are a key determinant of the quality of educational outcomes. If teachers receive more attention in their teaching activities, this will improve performance, particularly their teaching performance.

Teachers play a crucial role in teaching and learning activities in schools and serve as a human element. They contribute to the development of individuals with potential for development. Therefore, as a crucial component in education, teachers must actively participate and position themselves as professionals. By positioning themselves as

professionals, teachers are able to develop in line with increasingly advanced developments in society (Gazali et al., 2023). The role of a teacher is not merely that of a teacher who conveys and transfers knowledge, but also as an educator who teaches and instills life values and serves as a mentor who can provide various directions and guidance to students in the learning process. To improve teacher skills, guidance, supervision, and direction from the principal are essential. The principal's managerial activities are essential for developing superior teachers with high performance.

Good principal leadership and a positive teacher mindset positively influence teacher performance. The principal's leadership style will significantly influence and even determine the progress of the school. As a leader, the principal must be able to motivate his or her subordinates, because a leader's success in motivating people to achieve goals depends heavily on their authority. The new paradigm of educational management grants principals broad authority in planning, organizing, implementing, supervising, and controlling education in schools (Cucu & Iskandar, 2022; Hasim S et al., 2020; Siregar et al., 2022).

The principal is one of the driving forces behind human resources within the school. The principal's role is said to be highly influential in school progress and human resource development (Suprijati et al., 2024). Therefore, given the significant impact this role has on schools, it can be argued that the quality of the principal is crucial for achieving educational goals in the schools they lead. Therefore, as a school leader, there are five key elements that must be considered to become a successful leader and positively influence school progress and quality: personality, managerial competence, entrepreneurial competence, supervisory competence, and social competence (Wati et al., 2022).

The principal, viewed from his role as a reformer, has the task of implementing reforms in many areas. He must also have a way to ensure that school elements and the community can trust and support these reforms. Principals must make the right decisions, especially at school, because they are intermediaries or mediators in schools with various personalities and backgrounds, because conflicts can arise at any time (Aulia Fitri et al., 2022). As a person who arouses interest, he also has the authority to regulate the environment and conditions of the school, and establish systematic principles of compensation and punishment. Principals can be politicians in schools; in other words, principals have the highest authority to be authoritarian, but they must understand that building partnerships is far more important. The role of politicians as principals can be developed through: (a) building broad alliances or coalitions, (b) applying the principle of a network of mutual concern for each other's obligations, (c) working with various parties to ensure that everything is done correctly (Minsih et al., 2019).

Principals focus on managing the teaching and learning process as their primary activity, viewing other activities as supporting and accommodating. Therefore, managing the teaching and learning process is considered of the highest importance, while other activities are considered of lesser importance. Principals are capable and able to empower their schools, especially their human resources, by granting them authority, flexibility, and resources (Siti Julaiha, 2019).

This is in line with research by Wahidah et al., 2022, which states that teachers with a positive mindset possess several positive attributes, such as taking responsibility for improving their abilities, viewing setbacks and feedback as opportunities to learn and develop their skills, actively seeking new learning opportunities and challenges, tending to have positive and high expectations for their students, and using constructive language that does not demean their abilities when teaching students or themselves. Teachers play a vital role in students' overall attitudes, behaviors, thoughts, personalities, and perspectives/mindsets

#### **4. Conclusions**

The conclusion of this study is that principal leadership influences teacher performance. Based on the results obtained from 159 respondents consisting of civil servant teachers from all over the Kota District, 86% of teachers responded that principal leadership in the innovation dimension significantly influences teacher performance. The motivator dimension achieved a percentage of 85%, indicating that principal leadership in the motivational function significantly influences teacher performance. The supervisor dimension achieved a percentage of 81%, indicating that principal leadership influences teacher performance. The T-test results showed a significant value of  $0.003 < 0.05$ , indicating that principal leadership influences teacher performance.

Based on the conclusions of the research results above, further suggestions can be proposed that are expected to be useful in the future: principals should continuously conduct training and also continuously strive to improve their competencies, both in managing schools and the resources available in each school, so that they can increasingly influence teacher performance in the future.

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#### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare there is no conflict of interest

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