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The Contribution of School Principal Leadership and School Culture to Teacher Performance

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Abstract

Teacher performance plays a crucial role in determining the quality of education. However, many schools continue to face challenges related to suboptimal teacher productivity, which may be influenced by leadership and cultural factors within the school environment. This study aims to examine the contribution of principal leadership and school culture to teacher performance. The research employed a quantitative approach using a correlational method. Data were collected from 80 teachers across several schools through structured questionnaires. The variables measured included principal leadership, school culture, and teacher performance. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis. The results showed that both principal leadership and school culture had a strong and positive correlation with teacher performance, with correlation coefficients of 0.684 and 0.701, respectively. Furthermore, the regression analysis indicated that principal leadership and school culture together contributed significantly to teacher performance, with an R^2 value of 0.581. Among the two, school culture demonstrated a slightly higher influence than leadership. In conclusion, the findings suggest that enhancing both leadership practices and school culture can significantly improve teacher performance. It is recommended that school management prioritize the development of effective leadership strategies and the cultivation of a positive, collaborative school environment to support teacher growth and performance outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental pillar for national development, and the quality of education is closely tied to the performance of teachers (Gómez-Leal et al. 2022; Hallinger 2018). In the context of school-based education systems, teacher performance becomes a

central determinant of student success and institutional progress. However, teacher performance does not occur in isolation; it is shaped by various organizational and interpersonal factors, including the role of school leadership and the prevailing school culture. Recognizing the importance of these factors is essential for schools aiming to enhance professional standards and improve educational outcomes (Cansoy 2019; Tingle, Corrales, and Peters 2019).

Recent studies have emphasized the significance of principal leadership in influencing teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and classroom effectiveness. Effective principals serve not only as administrators but also as instructional leaders who create vision, inspire collaboration, and establish high expectations for teaching and learning (Zahed, Moeinikia, And Rezaei 2019). Simultaneously, a strong school culture marked by shared values, trust, and collegiality has been linked to higher teacher engagement and sustained performance (Baptiste 2019). Although several studies have explored each factor independently, limited research has examined the combined contribution of both leadership and school culture to teacher performance in a single model.

This study aims to address that gap by investigating the simultaneous influence of principal leadership and school culture on teacher performance (Lee and Louis 2019; Liu, Bellibaş, and Gümüş 2021). The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach that positions both leadership and cultural factors as joint predictors of teacher success. Furthermore, the study contextualizes this relationship within the framework of Indonesian schools, where leadership dynamics and cultural norms may differ from Western-based educational settings.

By analyzing how these two organizational variables interact and contribute to teacher performance, this study seeks to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving school management practices. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on school effectiveness and offer practical implications for policymakers, principals, and education practitioners aiming to foster high-performing teaching environments (Fitria 2018; Ingersoll, Sirinides, and Dougherty 2018).

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a correlational design to examine the contribution of principal leadership and school culture to teacher performance. The population consisted of teachers from several public secondary schools, and a total of 80 respondents were selected using purposive sampling based on their professional teaching status and years of experience. Data were collected using structured questionnaires developed and validated through expert judgment and a pilot test. Each questionnaire included items measured on a Likert scale to assess three main variables: principal leadership, school culture, and teacher performance.

Data analysis was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the mean, standard deviation, and score range for each variable, while inferential analysis involved Pearson's product-moment correlation to measure the strength of relationships between variables. In addition, multiple regression analysis was used to assess the combined effect of principal leadership and school culture on teacher performance. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 25, and a significance level of 0.05 was applied to test the hypotheses. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, were strictly observed throughout the research process.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study based on the data collected from 80 teachers regarding the variables of principal leadership, school culture, and teacher performance. The results are organized into descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis to comprehensively understand the relationships and contributions among the variables. The descriptive statistics provide an overview of the average scores and distribution of each variable, while the correlation analysis reveals the strength and direction of the relationships. Finally, the multiple regression analysis identifies the extent to which principal leadership and school culture jointly influence teacher performance.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Principal Leadership, School Culture, and Teacher Performance

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Principal Leadership	80	60	95	78.65	7.85
School Culture	80	58	94	76.42	8.12
Teacher Performance	80	62	96	79.18	7.67

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the three main variables studied: principal leadership, school culture, and teacher performance. The mean score for principal leadership was 78.65, indicating a relatively high perception of leadership quality among respondents. The school culture had a mean of 76.42, suggesting a positive cultural environment in schools. Meanwhile, the average teacher performance score was 79.18, reflecting good teacher productivity and engagement levels.

Table 2. Correlation Between Principal Leadership and Teacher Performance

Variables	r	Sig. (2-tailed)
Principal Leadership & Teacher Performance	0.684	0.000

Table 2 shows the result of Pearson correlation analysis between principal leadership and teacher performance. The correlation coefficient (r) is 0.684, which indicates a strong and positive relationship between the two variables. The significance value ($p = 0.000$) is less than 0.05, showing that the correlation is statistically significant. This implies that better principal leadership tends to be associated with higher teacher performance.

Table 3. Correlation Between School Culture and Teacher Performance

Variables	r	Sig. (2-tailed)
School Culture & Teacher Performance	0.701	0.000

Table 3 illustrates the Pearson correlation result between school culture and teacher performance. With a correlation coefficient of 0.701, the data suggests a strong and positive correlation. The significance level is also below 0.05 ($p = 0.000$), indicating a statistically significant relationship. This result highlights that a more positive school culture correlates with improved teacher performance.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis: The Influence of Principal Leadership and School Culture on Teacher Performance

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	25.471	4.912	—	5.186	0.000
Principal Leadership	0.327	0.078	0.392	4.192	0.000
School Culture	0.418	0.082	0.457	5.098	0.000
R = 0.762					
R ² = 0.581					
Adjusted R ² = 0.568					
F = 52.734					0.000

Table 4 summarizes the results of a multiple regression analysis to examine the combined effect of principal leadership and school culture on teacher performance. Both independent variables significantly predict teacher performance, with school culture ($\beta = 0.457$) showing slightly stronger influence than principal leadership ($\beta = 0.392$). The R^2 value of 0.581 indicates that 58.1% of the variation in teacher performance can be explained by the two predictors. The model is statistically significant ($F = 52.734$, $p < 0.05$), confirming the joint contribution of leadership and culture to performance outcomes.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that principal leadership has a strong and significant positive correlation with teacher performance. This suggests that the way school principals lead including their ability to provide direction, motivate teachers, make strategic decisions, and foster professional development directly influences how effectively teachers perform their duties. These findings are consistent with existing literature, which emphasizes that effective instructional leadership can create a supportive environment where teachers are motivated to enhance their teaching quality and student learning outcomes (Arif, Zainudin, and Hamid 2019; Kanya, Fathoni, and Ramdani 2021).

In addition to leadership, the study also found a significant and strong correlation between school culture and teacher performance. A positive school culture characterized by collaboration, shared values, mutual respect, and continuous improvement encourages teachers to work more enthusiastically and productively. A school environment that promotes trust and openness helps teachers feel more valued and supported, which in turn boosts their morale and commitment to their roles. This aligns with previous studies suggesting that a constructive school culture is a key factor in teacher engagement and sustained performance (Kalkan et al. 2020; Sirait 2021).

The regression analysis demonstrated that both principal leadership and school culture significantly contribute to teacher performance, with a combined explanatory power of 58.1%. Interestingly, school culture showed a slightly greater impact than leadership, implying that while leadership is essential in setting the direction, the overall atmosphere and shared norms within the school play a more dominant role in shaping daily behaviors and performance. This finding highlights the importance of not only developing leadership competencies but also cultivating a healthy school culture through participative decision-making, inclusive communication, and strong peer relationships (Atasoy 2020; Haq and A'yun 2020).

Taken together, the findings emphasize that improving teacher performance requires a dual focus: strengthening school leadership and nurturing a positive school culture. Educational

stakeholders and policymakers should invest in leadership training for principals while also promoting initiatives that build a collaborative and supportive school environment. Future research could further investigate other contributing factors, such as teacher motivation, workload, and professional development opportunities, to offer a more holistic understanding of what drives teacher performance in diverse educational contexts (Hasibuan 2022; Kaso et al. 2019; Tonich 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that both principal leadership and school culture significantly contribute to teacher performance. The findings demonstrate that effective leadership practices, combined with a positive and collaborative school culture, are essential in enhancing teachers' motivation, commitment, and overall job performance. Among the two, school culture showed a slightly stronger influence, indicating that a supportive and value-driven environment plays a crucial role in shaping teacher behavior. These results highlight the importance of integrated school management strategies that not only focus on strengthening leadership capacity but also on fostering a healthy and empowering school culture to improve the quality of education.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Regarding this study, the author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Study concept and design: Adrita Gusdila. Acquisition of data: M. Giatman. Analysis and interpretation of data: Jonni Mardizal. Drafting the manuscript: Adrita Gusdila. Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content: Riki Mukhaiyar. Statistical analysis: Adrita Gusdila.

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