

## **IMPACT OF PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES AND TEACHERS' WORK MOTIVATION ON TEACHER PERFORMANCE AT STATE VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS IN TANA TORAJA REGENCY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Improving the quality of public vocational high schools (SMK Negeri) is strongly influenced by teacher performance. Two factors frequently associated with such performance are the principal's leadership style and teachers' work motivation. This study examines the effects of principals' leadership style and teachers' work motivation on teacher performance in public vocational high schools in Tana Toraja Regency. Employing a quantitative approach, the research used a survey design with 106 respondents drawn from four public vocational high schools in Tana Toraja Regency. The questionnaire instrument used a Likert scale and was subjected to validity and reliability testing. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the model:  $Y = -2.450 + 0.152X_1 + 0.328X_2 + \epsilon$ . The results indicate that both leadership style and work motivation have a significant effect on teacher performance, with work motivation exerting a stronger influence than leadership style. Partially, leadership style significantly predicts performance ( $t = 6.665$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), and work motivation also significantly predicts performance ( $t = 12.367$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Correlation analysis shows positive relationships between leadership style and performance ( $r = 0.652$ ), leadership style and motivation ( $r = 0.453$ ), and motivation and performance ( $r = 0.818$ ). These findings underscore the importance of democratic leadership practices and motivation enhancing policies such as recognition, professional development, and a supportive work environment to sustain consistent teaching performance in vocational education.

**Keywords:** Leadership Style, Work Motivation, Teacher Performance, Public Vocational High School, Vocational Education.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The improvement of vocational education quality in Indonesia, particularly in vocational high schools (SMK), heavily depends on the quality of teacher performance. In this context, teachers are expected not only to possess adequate pedagogical competencies but also practical skills that align with industry needs. Several factors are often identified as key drivers of enhanced teacher performance, including the leadership style of school principals and

teacher work motivation. The leadership style of the principal plays a crucial role in creating a conducive organizational climate, providing clear direction, and offering the necessary support to enhance teacher performance (Robbins & Judge, 2017; Armstrong, 2014). Additionally, teacher motivation, which drives their energy and persistence, is also a key determinant of the quality of their performance (Locke & Latham, 2002; Armstrong, 2014). This study focuses on the situation in Tana Toraja

Regency, where variations in performance among schools have created a need to map the determinants of teacher performance based on evidence, serving as a foundation for more precise managerial interventions.

The leadership style of the school principal has a direct impact on how teachers perceive, plan, and accomplish their work, ultimately determining the level of organizational performance within the school. Effective managerial leadership not only manages administrative aspects but also provides clear direction, sets a positive example, and fosters a work climate that makes teachers feel valued, supported, and challenged to perform optimally. In line with (Hasibuan, 2016), the ability of the leader to foster harmonious integration is key, as schools are environments characterized by diverse personalities, workloads, and individual goals among teachers. Through open communication, proportional task distribution, and nurturing supervision, the principal can inspire teachers to develop their full potential, not just work to meet routine demands. Thus, the quality of the principal's leadership functions as the primary driver linking the school's strategic goals with the teachers' operational behaviors. Moreover, leadership can be defined as the art of persuading people to act. This definition leads to several concepts, primarily stating that leadership is a group phenomenon, motivating others to act in order to achieve goals, and is often linked to an individual's position within an organization (Sobirin, 2016). Motivation is a primary factor influencing employee behavior in the workplace. "The provision of driving power that creates enthusiasm in someone's work, enabling them to cooperate, work effectively, and integrate to achieve organizational

goals," is the definition of motivation (Hasibuan, 2016). Motivation is not just an abstract psychological drive but a planned management process through systems of rewards, leadership style, communication, and supportive work environments. Without the right motivation, employees tend to fulfill their obligations without actively collaborating. When an organization can effectively manage its motivation, a more spirited work atmosphere emerges, individual coordination strengthens, and organizational goals become more achievable. Therefore, motivation is a critical factor linking management policies with actual performance in the workplace (Hasibuan, 2016). The improvement of diverse performances, such as technical and operational skills, is part of human resource development. As the level of work produces the desired outcomes for the company, business success is essential.

Development focuses on various aspects, such as in-depth technical and operational skills, to enhance human resource performance. An organization's success in achieving its goals and delivering the desired products is heavily influenced by good performance, especially in terms of technical quality. A company's success largely depends on its human resources' ability to produce high-quality output that meets the company's expectations (Kurniawati, 2016). In such situations, improving technical skills gives the company a competitive advantage and boosts operational efficiency. Therefore, organizations must improve practical skills and technical knowledge that align with industry needs. Performance enhancement that combines technical and operational abilities is a strategic step for advancing the company and achieving its long-term goals.

Previous studies have revealed the issue of a relationship between leadership and performance in the field of education (Hoque & Raya, 2023), indicating that the leadership of school principals, while having a positive influence, does not significantly impact teachers' emotional behavior or motivation. (Suyitno, 2024) argues that the leadership of school principals does not directly and significantly influence teacher work motivation. On the contrary, the influence of school leadership on teacher motivation occurs through school culture as a mediating variable, suggesting that while leadership plays a role, its effect on teacher motivation is stronger through the development of a supportive school culture. (Pramuditha, C., Alwahid, M. A., & Hidayat, M. F., 2025), in their research, found that the leadership model applied by school principals did not have a significant effect on teacher performance. However, a different perspective is offered by (Akbar & Imaniyati, 2019), showing that the school principal's leadership style has a positive and significant impact on teacher performance, providing an understanding that this leadership style can effectively enhance teacher performance. Consistent with this finding, (Pratama, Giatman, & Ernawati, 2023) in their literature-based analysis between 2018 and 2023, also concluded that the leadership style of the school principal significantly influences teacher performance.

These findings emphasize the research gap regarding the direct influence of school leadership on teacher performance and work motivation. This indicates that, although school leadership is often associated with teacher performance, other factors such as school culture, support systems, and external factors may moderate or intervene in that influence, making the

effect of leadership not always direct or significant.

Based on the differences in research findings and the phenomena occurring in the field, the researcher has decided to conduct a further study on the Influence of School Principal Leadership Style and Teacher Motivation on Teacher Performance at State Vocational High Schools in Tana Toraja Regency, with case studies at the state vocational schools in Tana Toraja in 2025. This research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how these two factors interact and influence teacher performance in vocational education settings.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Leadership of School Principals

The term school principal, derived from the words "kepala" (head) and "sekolah" (school), refers to the leader of an educational institution who holds significant responsibility for managing all operational aspects of the school. As stipulated in Government Regulation No. 28 of 1990, the school principal is accountable for administration, the development of educational staff, as well as the maintenance of school facilities and infrastructure. (Basri, 2014) describes the school principal as a figure capable of leading school resources optimally in order to achieve collective goals. (Wahyudi, 2015) emphasizes that the position of the school principal is the result of extensive experience as a teacher, and the appointment of an individual to this role must meet certain criteria. Therefore, the school principal is not merely an administrator but also a leader who guides collective efforts in managing facilities, finances, and the welfare of the school to improve the quality of education.

Research conducted by (Rosmiati and Achmad, 2008) underscores the primary role of the school principal as an educational leader in creating an environment that supports the teaching and learning process. A positive environment enables both teachers and students to perform their tasks effectively. The principal's duties include managing school administration that fosters a productive learning environment, as well as supervising and enhancing the capacity of teachers to guide students' development. This highlights the crucial role of the principal in creating conditions that support optimal learning quality. Therefore, to improve education quality, the development of the principal's leadership skills, both in administrative and supervisory aspects, is key to creating a conducive and effective learning environment.

### **Teacher Motivation**

The word motivation derives from "motiv," which refers to the internal drive within a person to take certain actions in order to achieve a specific goal (Sardiman, 2011). (Uno, 2008) defines motivation as both internal and external forces that drive an individual to achieve pre-set goals. (Hasibuan, 2003) takes a different view, stating that "motivation is the drive that awakens one's desire, generating enthusiasm for their work, making them eager to cooperate, succeed in their work, and direct all efforts toward fulfillment." Therefore, motivation is defined as anything that inspires someone to take action in order to achieve a goal.

Based on the aforementioned criteria, the definition of teacher motivation in this study refers to the factors that encourage teachers to work hard in order to achieve specific goals. To perform or behave appropriately and

accomplish their professional tasks as educators, teachers need to be motivated.

### **Teacher Performance**

Teacher performance can be viewed from two key aspects: the performance of the teacher and the teacher themselves. (Rusyan, 2000) explains that a teacher's performance is not limited to the teaching task alone but also includes additional responsibilities such as school management, student learning, and assisting in evaluations that directly involve students. In the Teacher Supervisor Guidelines for Evaluating Teacher Performance, cited by (Kusmianto, 1997), it is explained that teacher performance standards are measures of how well teachers fulfill their responsibilities. These standards encompass several aspects, such as working individually with students, preparing and planning lessons, using teaching media, engaging students in learning experiences, and the teacher's active leadership.

According to (Article 39(2) of Law No. 20, 2003) on the National Education System of the Republic of Indonesia, educators are recognized as professional personnel with the responsibility to organize and implement the education process, assess educational outcomes, provide instruction, and conduct research and community service. This statute provides an understanding of the teacher performance standards in carrying out their professional duties. Teachers are expected to effectively plan lessons, deliver quality learning processes, and assess and evaluate learning outcomes, as outlined in Section 20(a), Chapter 14, of the 2005 Law on Teachers and Lecturers.

(Soedijarto, 1993) further adds that teachers must possess expertise in four core competencies. Teachers need to develop skills in preparing learning

programs, implementing and supervising instructional procedures, measuring the success of the learning process, and fostering positive relationships with students.

Meanwhile, in (Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 41, 2007) regarding the Process Standards for Secondary Education Units, it is explained that the teacher's core tasks include preparing lessons, implementing teaching, evaluating learning outcomes, providing instructions and guidance to students, and performing additional responsibilities. Teacher performance can be assessed through their interactions with students in the classroom, as well as in their preparations, which are reflected in semester planning and lesson planning.

The importance of evaluating teacher performance is also supported by the development of teacher performance assessment instruments, such as those conducted by the Georgia Department of Education and later modified by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture into the Teacher Competency Assessment Tool (APKG). Some of the instruments used to assess teacher competence include lesson plans and teaching materials, instructional procedures, and interpersonal communication skills reflected in the relationships between teachers and students. Therefore, teacher performance can be understood as the extent to which teachers succeed in carrying out their professional responsibilities and achieving the expected educational and learning objectives (Yani, 2024).

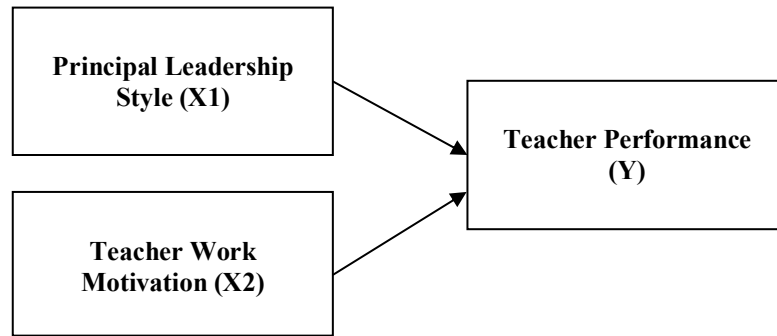
## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework is a visual representation of the relationships among variables in a study, as explained by Muhammad (2009), and is expressed through a framework that has a logical structure.

The conceptual framework must be evaluated based on the research objects and variables. It is important to be as accurate and rational as possible when describing the state of thinking. A study can be more organized and focused through the use of a conceptual framework. The following is a description of the research framework:

One of the factors that influence teacher performance is the leadership of the school principal. The principal plays an important role in the educational environment as a figure of authority, as one of their responsibilities is to manage, direct, and guide teachers to achieve the desired performance. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture (Permendikbud) No. 6 of 2018 states that a school principal is a teacher who is assigned to supervise and manage a school area. The principal serves a four-year term of office.

The leadership of the school principal affects the diversity of teaching methodologies and the learning environment applied, as well as the level of comfort felt by teachers and students in the classroom. Teachers tend to perform better when their superiors create a supportive and comfortable environment. Since the teaching and learning process of students is highly influenced by teacher performance, the instructional process will be affected if teacher performance is below standard. Therefore, the leadership style of the school principal has a significant influence on teacher performance.

**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework**METHOD**

This study is quantitative in nature, aligned with the ideology of the positivist approach, which is used to test a specified population or sample. The population in this research consists of school principals and teachers. A population is universally defined and determined by researchers, although it is reasonable that the target and accessible population may not be precisely defined together (Nestor, 2017).

The population is located in several public vocational high schools in

Tana Toraja Regency, totaling 106 individuals. The sample of this study is based on the following guideline: if the population is fewer than 100 people, the entire population can be used as the sample. However, if the population exceeds 100, the sample can range from 10-15% or 20-25% of the total population (Arikunto, 2012). The sample size in this study is 106 individuals, which is in accordance with the sampling method requirements. A questionnaire is the instrument used in this research, and before data collection, validity and reliability tests were conducted.

**Table 1.** Research Instrument Grid

Variable	Indicators	Statement Numbers	Measurement Scale
Principal Leadership Style, (X1)	Democratic/transformational indicators: inspiration, support, participation	1 - 10	Skala Likert
Teacher work motivation, (X2)	Intrinsic-extrinsic	1 - 11	Skala Likert
Teacher Performance, (X3)	Planning, implementation, assessment, development	1 – 15	Skala Likert

A questionnaire is considered valid if the answers to its questions can be used to determine what is intended to be measured. The key indicators of the quality of a measurement are the reliability and validity of the research. In standard research, every score obtained from a measuring instrument is the sum of the 'true score,' which is unknown, and

the 'error' in the measurement process. If the margin of error is low and the research results are reported with high standards, there is no doubt that the research will yield meaningful results. If the measurement is highly accurate, the researcher will obtain the correct scores (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). Validity testing has three criteria

measured in the following ways: Convergent Validity, which shows that an instrument correlates highly with another instrument; Divergent Validity, which shows that an instrument correlates poorly with instruments measuring divergent variables; and Predictive Validity, meaning the instrument must show a strong correlation (Heale and Twycross, 2015).

The reliability of a questionnaire can be measured as an indicator of a variable or construct. It is stated that techniques used to calculate reliability tests include: 1) test-retest, 2) alternative or parallel form, 3) split-half, and 4) internal consistency (Loannis and Aggeliki, 2015). There are two techniques for estimating reliability: Repeated measures, which involve asking the same question multiple times and comparing the results, and One-shot measurement, where the measurement is taken once, and the correlation between responses to questions is calculated or compared with other questions. Reliability is tested using Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) statistical test through SPSS. If Cronbach's  $\alpha > 0.70$ , the instrument is considered reliable (Ghozali, 2012).

This study is located at a state-owned Vocational High School in Tana Toraja, with data collection techniques including: Questionnaire Preparation, Questionnaire Pilot Test, Questionnaire Distribution, Questionnaire Collection, and Data Processing. A questionnaire survey is used as the data collection method in this research. A questionnaire is a data collection method where subjects are asked a series of questions or asked to respond to statements on an online questionnaire, commonly known as Google Forms. When the number of respondents is sufficient and spread across a wide area, a questionnaire is an appropriate method for collecting data (Sugiyono, 2010).

The T-statistic test essentially determines how much of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the influence of one independent or explanatory variable (Ghozali, 2013). The steps for testing the T-statistic are as follows:

### **Formulating H0 and H1**

- a. Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no influence of the school principal's leadership style and teacher work motivation on the performance of teachers at SMK Negeri Tana Toraja.
- b. Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is an influence of the school principal's leadership style and teacher work motivation on the performance of teachers at SMK Negeri Tana Toraja.

### **Decision to Reject or Accept the Hypothesis**

In this case, there are only two possible choices regarding the hypothesis: to reject it or to accept it. When we reject a hypothesis, we arrive at an incorrect conclusion. Accepting the hypothesis also means that there is insufficient sample data to support the conclusion that the hypothesis should be rejected. In other words, just because the hypothesis is accepted does not necessarily mean it is true. (Rinaldi Munir, 2010).

The data analysis in this study uses direct regression analysis. There is a linear relationship between the independent variables (X) and the dependent variable in simple linear regression analysis (Y). Interval or ratio data scales are used (Sari and Wardani, 2015). The regression formula is:  $Y = -2.450 + 0.152X_1 + 0.328X_2 + \epsilon$ , where: Y = Teacher Performance,  $-2.450$  = Constant,  $X_1$  = School Principal's Leadership Style,  $X_2$  = Teacher Work Motivation,  $\epsilon$  = Residual Error (error).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted in Tana Toraja Regency, located in South Sulawesi Province. The four vocational high schools (SMKs) that are the focus of this research are: SMK Negeri 1 Tana Toraja, SMK Negeri 2 Tana Toraja,

SMK Negeri 3 Tana Toraja, and SMK Negeri 4 Tana Toraja. These schools were selected as research samples due to their vocational programs that are highly relevant to industry needs, their comprehensive learning facilities, and their achievements in both academic and non-academic fields.

**Table 2.** Respondent Characteristics

Teacher's Status	Description	Total	Percentage
Length of Service	< 5 Years	18	17 %
	5 – 10 Years	39	38.8 %
	10 – 15 Years	0	0 %
	15 – 20 Years	34	32.1 %
	>20 Years	15	14.2 %
Employment Status	ASN (Civil Servant)	47	44.3 %
	Non ASN	59	55.7 %
Highest Education Level	D3 (Diploma)	0	0 %
	S1 (Bachelor's)	106	100 %
	S2 (Master's)	0	0 %
	S3 (Doctorate)	0	0 %

The majority of respondents (39 individuals or 38.8%) have teaching experience of less than 10 years, indicating that the school has a substantial number of teachers with intermediate experience. A significant portion of respondents (32.1%) have between 10 and 20 years of experience, reflecting a stable teaching workforce. A smaller percentage (14.2%) have over 20 years of experience, suggesting the presence of highly experienced senior teachers at the school. Notably, there were no teachers in the 10 to 15-year category, which may indicate an impact of changes in the school's structure or policies. More than half of the respondents (55.7%) are honorarium teachers, highlighting that the majority of the teaching staff at this school holds a more unstable status compared to ASN teachers. This could potentially affect their well-being and work motivation.

Approximately 44.3% of the teachers at this school are ASN teachers, who generally have clear benefits and a more stable status within the government system. All respondents (100%) hold a bachelor's degree, indicating that every teacher who filled out the questionnaire has completed higher education at the undergraduate level. This provides insight into the educational qualifications of the teaching staff at the school.

Based on the research findings, a significant positive correlation was found between the Principal's Leadership Style and Teacher Performance, with a correlation value of  $r = 0.652$  and  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ . This indicates a strong and significant relationship between these two variables. The correlation between Teacher Performance and Performance Outcomes was  $r = 0.482$  with  $p = 0.002$ .



$< 0.05$ , signifying a moderate and statistically significant positive relationship. The better the principal's leadership style, the higher the teacher's performance. Moreover, the relationship between the principal's leadership style (X1) and teacher work motivation (X2) also showed a significant correlation with a coefficient of 0.453 and a significance of  $p < 0.05$ , categorized as moderately strong. This indicates that the principal's leadership style is positively related to teacher work motivation. Additionally, the teacher work motivation variable (X2) demonstrated a very strong and significant relationship with teacher performance (Y), with a correlation coefficient of 0.818 and a significance value of  $p < 0.05$ . This coefficient is classified as very strong, indicating that the higher the teacher's work motivation, the higher their performance. Overall, these correlation results provide initial evidence that there is a positive and significant relationship between all variables in this study. The findings support the initial hypothesis that both the principal's leadership style and teacher work motivation play a crucial role in enhancing teacher performance.

Based on the regression analysis of the Principal's Leadership Style variable on Teacher Performance, the t-value was found to be 6.665 with a significance of  $p < 0.001$ . Since the p-value is much smaller than the significance level  $\alpha = 5\%$  (0.05), the hypothesis test decision is to Reject  $H_0$ . Therefore, at a 95% confidence level, it can be concluded that the Principal's Leadership Style has a significant partial effect on Teacher Performance at SMK Negeri in Tana Toraja District.

Based on the regression analysis for the Teacher Work Motivation variable on Teacher Performance, the analysis revealed a t-value of 12.367

with a significance of  $p < 0.001$ . Since the p-value is much smaller than the significance level  $\alpha = 5\%$  (0.05), the hypothesis test decision is to Reject  $H_0$ . This means that at a 95% confidence level, Teacher Work Motivation significantly affects Teacher Performance.

### **The Influence of Leadership Style on the Performance of Vocational High School Teachers in Tana Toraja District**

(Saimin, 2009) and (Bahri, 2011) argue that the principal's key role in creating a school environment that fosters the development of both character and intelligence in students is essential. They focus on the educational objective of creating individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess good character and are ready to contribute to society. One of the key elements in improving the quality of education is the role of teachers, who are at the forefront of educational reform. Teachers are responsible for managing and creating a conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning. Therefore, the quality of teachers' performance is crucial to the success of education at both the micro and macro levels.

Optimal teacher performance can be seen through their sense of responsibility in carrying out their professional duties. This includes adherence to and loyalty in performing their teaching tasks both in and out of the classroom. A teacher's success in their duties is not only measured by achievements but also by the teaching and learning processes that occur. Therefore, teachers must develop all their competencies and create a situation that supports effective teaching in the school.

Good teacher performance is also highly dependent on the leadership of the

principal. As the leader of the school, the principal plays a significant role in motivating and directing teachers to work at their best. Effective leadership ensures that the educational goals of the school are achieved, with a well-supported and well-structured environment. The principal does not merely act as an organizer but also as a motivator who can drive all members of the school to work together toward common goals.

Leadership is the art of persuading people to act. In the context of education, a principal, as a leader, is expected to influence teachers to create an environment that is conducive to effective learning (Sobirin, 2016). The principal must be able to motivate and inspire teachers to behave according to the established objectives. Leadership is a process that leads followers to take actions aimed at achieving organizational goals. Effective leadership can foster loyalty and motivation among staff, which ultimately contributes to the achievement of the organization's goals. In the context of education, the principal plays a crucial role in creating an effective system in which every member of the organization actively participates in achieving shared objectives (Hasibuan, 2016). A principal who is capable of motivating and setting a good example can create a work atmosphere that supports improving teacher performance.

Principals must possess strong managerial and leadership skills to create a healthy work climate. The principal acts as the driving force in human resource management, including teachers, with the aim of creating a vision and direction for the school (Wahyudi, 2015). Good leadership will influence the motivation and performance of teachers in carrying out their duties.

A study by (Suwarni, 2011) indicates that the principal's leadership style positively affects teacher productivity. A democratic and communicative leadership style can create an environment that supports collaboration between teachers and the principal, which in turn enhances the quality of learning. This aligns with the findings of (Sumarni, and colleagues, 2017), which emphasize that principals who demonstrate good leadership styles can create a supportive work environment and motivate teachers to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

According to the research, principals who effectively provide guidance and support for teachers' professional development can enhance their capacity and work morale. Therefore, the principal's leadership style significantly influences teacher performance and, ultimately, the quality of education in schools.

### **The Influence of Work Motivation on the Performance of Vocational High School Teachers in Tana Toraja Regency**

In education, it is crucial to develop effective strategies to capitalize on the opportunities created by the decentralization policies and autonomy implemented by the government. These educational strategies must focus on utilizing available resources, so that students can face and solve problems independently by leveraging the resources around them. The goal is for education to not be avoided by society, but rather sought after due to its benefits. One key component in education is the role of the teacher, which plays a significant part in the learning process.

Public trust in the teaching profession is vital, as it determines the existence and strength of the profession. This trust is reflected in the public's

perception that the educational services needed can only be provided by teachers. Therefore, improving the performance of teachers is crucial to maintaining the profession's good image and public trust. Teacher performance not only encompasses the achievement of learning objectives but also how teachers interact with students and create a conducive learning environment. As stated by Kusmianto (1997), teacher performance is a determining factor in achieving educational goals at school.

Teacher performance involves the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate teaching effectively. Optimal performance is, of course, influenced by many factors, one of which is work motivation. Teacher work motivation is an essential factor in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Uno (2008) explains that motivation consists of internal and external forces that drive an individual to achieve established goals. In the context of education, high motivation encourages teachers to be more productive in planning and implementing lessons and to remain committed to achieving students' academic goals.

High motivation also has a direct impact on student achievement, as motivated teachers tend to create more effective and innovative learning environments. This aligns with Hasibuan's (2016) view, which asserts that motivation plays an essential role in increasing work enthusiasm and encouraging individuals to work harder. In this context, teacher work motivation is crucial in creating an atmosphere that supports the achievement of educational goals. Research by Suwarni (2011) also shows that the effective leadership style of school principals contributes to improving teacher motivation, which in turn enhances their performance.

The research findings show a significant relationship between teacher work motivation and their performance. The higher the work motivation, the better the performance. This aligns with the findings of Gitosudarmo in Sutrisno (2009), who emphasized that motivation is not only a driving element but also a key factor that transforms energy and knowledge into optimal performance. Therefore, managing teacher motivation is essential to improving the quality of teaching and learning at schools.

In managing human resources in the education sector, motivation is a very important factor. Hasibuan (2016) states that motivation acts as a drive that awakens enthusiasm for a person's work, motivating them to collaborate and achieve success. Therefore, for school principals and educational managers, attention to teacher work motivation should be a priority, as it directly influences the quality of education produced.

### **The Influence of Leadership Style and Work Motivation on the Performance of State Vocational High School Teachers in Tana Toraja Regency**

Schools serve as formal educational institutions with the aim not only of imparting knowledge but also of developing competencies, skills, and fundamental attitudes that support the formation of well-rounded individuals. Improving the quality of education is the primary goal of Indonesia's development, and in this context, the quality of teacher performance becomes a critical factor in achieving this goal. Teachers play a dual role, both as educators who transfer knowledge and as mentors who guide students to become intelligent, active, creative, and independent individuals. This challenging task can only be carried out

by professional teachers with optimal performance.

Teacher performance, which reflects the outcomes of their work, directly impacts the quality of education. Therefore, it is essential to enhance teacher performance to ensure the effectiveness of the educational process. Several factors influence teacher performance, with two main factors being the leadership style of the principal and the teachers' work motivation. The principal, as the leader of the school, plays a strategic role in creating an environment that supports the learning process. In this regard, the principal must be able to provide clear direction and inspire teachers to work harder.

According to Hasibuan (2016), effective school leadership can mobilize all members of the school to collaborate in achieving educational goals. An inspiring principal can foster loyalty, trust, and intrinsic motivation among teachers, which in turn enhances their performance. Furthermore, the principal is also responsible for creating a conducive environment for the development of teachers. This aligns with Mulyasa's (2003) view, which states that an educational leader must possess strategic skills, including the ability to build a vision, direct staff, and create a positive learning climate.

Good leadership not only involves administrative management but also supervision and professional development for teachers. An effective principal must guide teachers in facing the challenges of their work and provide the support needed to enhance their competence. As a leader, the principal must also motivate teachers to achieve better results. The motivation provided by the principal can strengthen teachers' commitment to the school's objectives and encourage them to be more diligent in teaching.

In a study by Rosmiati and Achmad (2008), it was found that the principal plays a crucial role in creating an environment that supports the teaching and learning process. An effective principal not only manages the school's administration but also provides clear direction and support to teachers. Additionally, research by Septiana et al. (2013) indicates that a good leadership style from the principal can enhance teachers' work motivation, which directly impacts the improvement of the quality of teaching.

Thus, it can be concluded that both the principal's leadership style and teachers' work motivation have a significant influence on teacher performance. This study provides evidence that a combination of effective leadership and high work motivation can improve teacher performance, which, in turn, enhances the quality of education provided to students.

The results of this study make a significant contribution to the development of human resource research, particularly in the context of education. By demonstrating a strong and significant correlation between the school principal's leadership style and teacher performance, this research emphasizes the crucial role of leadership in influencing teachers' work outcomes. The findings, which reveal a positive correlation between the school principal's leadership style and teacher work motivation, as well as between work motivation and teacher performance, suggest that effective leadership not only affects the work environment but can also enhance individual motivation, which ultimately contributes to better performance.

This study also highlights that work motivation is an essential factor in improving the quality of education. As the primary human resource in education,

teachers require a supportive environment and high motivation to actively contribute to achieving optimal learning objectives. Therefore, these findings provide strong empirical evidence that a good school principal's leadership style and high work motivation significantly influence teacher performance. This differentiates this study from previous research that focused more on other aspects without emphasizing the relationship between motivation, leadership, and teacher performance. In the context of human resources, proper management of these two variables can enhance productivity and the quality of education, which in turn contributes to the broader development of human capacity within the education system.

This research enriches the literature on educational management and human resources by underscoring the critical role of leadership in improving both individual and organizational performance in education, which is relevant for developing policies and strategies for human resource management in the education sector.

From this research, although a significant relationship has been found between the school principal's leadership style, teacher work motivation, and teacher performance, several important aspects of human resource management that could be further explored or developed still require attention. First, there is a need for in-depth studies on external factors that influence teacher work motivation, such as educational policies, teacher welfare, and social support from the community or parents. In many cases, work motivation does not solely depend on the principal's leadership but also on external conditions that can either drive or hinder motivation (Sujarweni, 2016).

Second, this study could be enhanced by incorporating a more comprehensive measurement of teacher performance, including how their teaching quality affects student learning outcomes, as well as more detailed indicators to assess performance, such as teacher engagement in professional training, the use of technology in teaching, and involvement in extracurricular activities.

Moreover, it would be beneficial if this research explored the role of school organizational culture in improving teacher performance. A positive school culture can serve as a strong foundation to support the school principal's leadership and teacher work motivation. This is important considering the diversity in school characteristics, which can influence the dynamics of teacher performance. Adding this variable would provide a broader perspective in human resource management within the education sector.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the leadership style of school principals and teacher motivation significantly influence the performance of teachers at state vocational schools in Tana Toraja Regency. Principals who effectively apply transformational leadership styles can create a work environment that supports teacher motivation and performance. The simultaneous development of these two factors is expected to enhance the quality of education. Future research could explore the influence of other external factors and more specific leadership strategies in improving teacher performance.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that principals regularly conduct teacher performance evaluations through direct observation, peer assessments, and student feedback.

Principals should also provide training for the development of teachers' competencies. The transformational leadership style is crucial for motivating teachers, creating a collaborative environment, and aligning leadership styles with the needs of the teachers.

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