

## Analysis of Principal Leadership in Improving Teacher Performance at State Senior High School 1 Amurang

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### ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the importance of principal leadership in improving teacher performance as one of the main factors determining the quality of education. The purpose of this study is to analyze the implementation of principal leadership, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and examine its contribution to improving teacher performance at SMA Negeri 1 Amurang. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The results show that the principal's leadership is integrative by combining transformational, instructional, and democratic styles. This leadership has proven effective in improving teacher performance through the implementation of continuous academic supervision, providing motivation and appreciation, and the implementation of open and harmonious communication. However, weaknesses remain in the utilization of learning technology and innovative teaching methods. Therefore, ongoing efforts to develop digital competency and teacher professionalism are needed. Therefore, principal leadership plays a significant role in improving teacher performance through effective management and creating a positive work environment.

## INTRODUCTION

The quality of education is largely determined by the quality of teachers, the primary implementers of the learning process. Teachers with strong competence, motivation, and performance will be able to produce effective learning processes. The principal, as an educational leader, plays a strategic role in mobilizing all school resources to achieve established goals. According to modern leadership theory, the principal acts not only as an administrator but also as an inspirator, motivator, supervisor, change manager, and professional coach for teachers. Through effective leadership, the principal can create a conducive school climate, a collaborative work culture, and management that supports teacher performance improvement.

In the context of SMA Negeri 1 Amurang, the demand for improving learning quality is increasing with the implementation of the independent curriculum, which encourages student-centered learning, in-depth learning, and strengthening teacher competencies. Furthermore, variations in teacher performance in terms of lesson planning, lesson implementation, media and technology use, evaluation procedures, and discipline remain challenges that require serious attention.

Therefore, this research is crucial to analyze how the principal's leadership at SMA Negeri 1 Amurang is implemented, the supporting and inhibiting factors, and how it contributes to improving teacher performance. The results of this study are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of effective educational leadership strategies in improving school quality.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Principal Leadership*

Principal leadership can be understood as the ability of the individual holding the position of principal to influence the behavior of teachers, educational staff, and students so that learning aligns with the school's vision and mission. According to Wahjosumidjo (2020), principal leadership is the process of influencing, coordinating, and directing the school community to achieve desired goals. Mulyasa (2021) emphasizes that principal leadership encompasses the ability to mobilize and empower the school's potential to improve educational quality. Meanwhile, according to Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 6 of 2018, the principal functions as an instructional leader, manager, supervisor, and moral role model for the entire school community. From these definitions, it can be concluded that principal leadership encompasses managerial, instructional, interpersonal, and moral aspects, which work synergistically to increase the effectiveness of learning delivery.

From a modern educational management perspective, the principal's leadership function encompasses several key roles: educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, innovator, and motivator. As educators, principals play a role in improving teacher competency through coaching and professional development. This aligns with Danim's (2021) opinion, which states that principals must be able to guide teachers in improving the quality of learning through ongoing coaching activities.

### *Teacher Performance*

According to Suwandi (2021), teacher performance is the level of achievement of a teacher in carrying out their professional duties based on established competency standards, process standards, and assessment standards. Teacher performance reflects the quality of work demonstrated through the ability to manage learning effectively. Mulyasa (2021) states that teacher performance is closely related to the teacher's ability to plan lessons, implement active and innovative learning, and conduct objective and continuous evaluation of learning outcomes. This indicates that teacher performance is a key indicator in assessing the quality of education in a school.

Furthermore, teacher performance can also be seen in aspects of discipline and responsibility, such as attendance, punctuality, and commitment to assigned tasks. Hasibuan (2020) states that work discipline is a factor that significantly influences individual performance within an organization. Furthermore, professionalism is also an important indicator, demonstrated through teachers' ability to participate in training, innovate in learning, and collaborate with colleagues. Dewi and Sutarto (2021) found that teachers with a high level of professionalism tend to demonstrate better performance in carrying out learning tasks. Furthermore, teacher performance is influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Internal factors include pedagogical competence, work motivation, and teacher personality, while external factors include the principal's leadership, work environment, facilities and infrastructure, and academic supervision. According to Uno (2020), work motivation is a crucial factor driving individuals to achieve optimal performance. Meanwhile, Robbins and Judge (2020) state that a conducive work environment and effective leadership will improve individual performance within an organization.

Teacher performance is also linked to the ability to adapt to change, such as the use of technology in learning and the implementation of a dynamic curriculum. Bush (2020) emphasizes that teachers who are able to adapt to change will be more effective in improving the quality of learning and student learning outcomes.

### *The Relationship Between Principal Leadership and Teacher Performance*

Principal leadership is closely linked to teacher performance, as the principal plays the primary role of directing, coaching, and developing teachers' potential in carrying out their professional duties. Teacher performance is not only determined by individual abilities but is also significantly influenced by how the principal executes their leadership role in creating a conducive work environment. According to Bush (2020), effective educational leadership can improve individual performance within a school organization through systematic management and strengthening the work culture.

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## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach, a research method aimed at understanding and describing phenomena in depth based on real-world conditions. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meanings derived from individuals or groups related to a particular social problem or phenomenon. Similarly, Sugiyono (2021) stated that qualitative research is used to examine the natural conditions of objects, where the researcher acts as a key instrument in data collection and analysis. This approach was chosen because the study focused on analyzing the principal's leadership in improving teacher performance, which requires a comprehensive understanding of the behaviors, interactions, and experiences of informants.

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Amurang, South Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, from January to March 2026. Data collection techniques in this study included three main methods: in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The data analysis technique in this study used the qualitative data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), which includes three main stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data analysis was conducted interactively and continuously from the beginning of data collection until the study's completion, resulting in valid and in-depth data.

The validity of the data in this study was ensured through three techniques. First, triangulation was carried out in three forms: (a) source triangulation, which compares data obtained from various informants to ensure consistency of information; (b) technical triangulation, which compares data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation; and (c) time triangulation, which collects data at different points in time to assess the stability of the information (Sugiyono, 2021). Second, member checking was conducted by showing the interview results or a summary of the findings to informants for confirmation, ensuring that the data truly reflects the actual situation. Third, an audit trail is conducted by systematically documenting the entire research process, starting from data collection, data analysis, to drawing conclusions, as recommended by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), so that the research process can be traced back and scientifically accounted for.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Based on data analysis through interviews, observations, and documentation, several important findings were obtained regarding the principal's leadership in improving teacher performance at SMA Negeri 1 Amurang. These findings are the result of integrating all data analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model.

1. Principal Leadership Is Integrative (Combinative)

Research findings indicate that the principal does not use a single leadership style, but rather a combination of several styles: transformational, instructional, and democratic. Transformational leadership is evident through motivation and role modeling, instructional leadership is evident through academic supervision, and democratic leadership is evident through teacher involvement in decision-making. These findings indicate that flexible and adaptive leadership is more effective in improving teacher performance than using a single leadership style.

2. Academic Supervision as a Key Factor in Improving Teacher Performance

Regular and ongoing academic supervision is a key factor in improving teacher performance. Supervision serves not only as an evaluation tool but also as a means of coaching and professional development for teachers. These findings indicate that constructive and ongoing supervision can significantly improve the quality of learning.

3. Motivation and Appreciation Improve Teacher Morale

Providing motivation and appreciation by the principal has been shown to increase teacher morale, responsibility, and commitment in carrying out their duties. Teachers feel appreciated and supported, which positively impacts their performance. This indicates that psychological aspects such as motivation play a crucial role in improving teacher performance.

4. Effective Communication Creates a Conducive Work Climate

Open and harmonious communication between the principal, teachers, and staff creates a comfortable and collaborative work atmosphere. Effective communication minimizes conflict and enhances cooperation in implementing school programs. This finding confirms that communication is a crucial element in successful educational leadership.

5. A Positive Work Climate Supports Teacher Performance

A conducive work environment, characterized by cooperation, discipline, and harmonious relationships among school personnel, is a supporting factor in improving teacher performance. This indicates that teacher performance is influenced not only by individual factors, but also by the work environment created by the principal's leadership.

6. Teacher Performance Is Good, But Needs Improvement in Innovation and Technology

In general, teacher performance is in the good category, especially in the planning and implementation of learning. However, there are still weaknesses in the utilization of learning technology and innovation in teaching methods. These findings indicate the need to develop digital competencies and teacher creativity to meet the demands of modern education.

7. Principal Leadership Plays a Significant Role in Improving Teacher Performance

Overall, the research findings indicate that principal leadership plays a crucial role in improving teacher performance through academic supervision, motivation, communication, and the creation of a positive work climate.

The results indicate that the principal's leadership at SMA Negeri 1 Amurang has a significant influence on teacher performance. The leadership implemented is not only administrative but also oriented towards teacher professional development. Transformational leadership is evident in the principal's ability to motivate and inspire teachers. This aligns with the theory that transformational leaders are able to improve the performance of subordinates through motivation and a clear vision. Instructional leadership is evident through the implementation of routine and targeted academic supervision. This supervision has a positive impact on improving the quality of teacher learning. Furthermore, the democratic leadership implemented by the principal encourages teacher involvement in decision-making. This fosters a strong sense of ownership and responsibility for their work.

The findings of this study align with previous research showing that principal leadership influences teacher performance through motivation, supervision, and communication. However, this study also found that there are still obstacles in the use of technology and learning innovation, indicating the need for further development.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the research results and discussion regarding the principal's leadership in improving teacher performance at SMA Negeri 1 Amurang, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The principal's leadership is integrative and adaptive. The principal applies a combination of transformational, instructional, and democratic leadership styles. Transformational leadership is evident in the ability to provide motivation and role models, instructional leadership is evident through the implementation of academic supervision, and democratic leadership is evident in teacher involvement in decision-making. This combination of leadership styles has proven effective in creating a conducive work environment and improving teacher performance.
2. Teacher performance is in the good but not optimal category. Teachers have carried out their professional duties well, including planning, implementing, and evaluating learning. Discipline and responsibility also show positive results. However, there are still weaknesses in the use of learning technology and innovative teaching methods that need to be improved.
3. The principal's leadership plays a significant role in improving teacher performance. This role is realized through targeted academic supervision, motivation and appreciation, effective communication, and the creation of a positive work climate. Academic supervision is a key factor in teacher development, while motivation and communication contribute to increased work enthusiasm and collaboration.
4. Supporting and inhibiting factors influence teacher performance. Supporting factors include effective leadership, teamwork, and a conducive work environment. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors include limited technological mastery and a lack of innovation in learning.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the success of improving teacher performance is greatly influenced by the effectiveness of the principal's leadership in managing, developing, and empowering human resources in the school.

Based on the research findings, the researcher offers the following recommendations:

1. For School Principals. School principals are expected to continue developing an adaptive and innovative leadership style, particularly in increasing the intensity of academic supervision and teacher development. Furthermore, specific strategies are needed to encourage the use of technology and learning innovation among teachers.
2. For Teachers. Teachers are expected to continue improving their professional competencies, particularly in the use of learning technology and the development of innovative teaching methods. Teachers are also expected to be more active in participating in training, workshops, and other self-development activities.
3. For Schools. Schools are expected to provide more adequate learning support facilities, particularly related to educational technology. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen a collaborative work culture and create an environment that encourages innovation in learning.
4. For Future Researchers. Further researchers are advised to develop this research using different approaches, such as quantitative or mixed methods, and expand the research variables, for example by examining the influence of leadership on learning innovation, teacher job satisfaction, or student learning outcomes.

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