

The Influence of Principals' Leadership on Teachers' Work Loyalty in Public Vocational High Schools in Padang Timur District

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ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by the relatively low level of work loyalty among some teachers at public vocational high schools (SMK Negeri) in Padang Timur District. The objectives of this study were to: (1) describe teachers' work loyalty, (2) describe principals' leadership, and (3) analyze the influence of principals' leadership on teachers' work loyalty at public vocational high schools in Padang Timur District. This study employed a quantitative method with a correlational research design. The population consisted of all teachers at public vocational high schools in Padang Timur District, totaling 166 teachers. A sample of 119 teachers was selected using the proportional stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. The data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, prerequisite tests, and hypothesis testing. The results showed that principals' leadership obtained a mean score of 4.46 with a Respondent Achievement Level (TCR) of 89.3%, which was categorized as good. Meanwhile, teachers' work loyalty obtained a mean score of 4.14 with a TCR of 82.8%, also categorized as good. The hypothesis testing indicated that principals' leadership had a positive and significant effect on teachers' work loyalty, with a calculated t-value of 7.858, which was greater than the critical t-value of 1.980, and a significance value of 0.001, which was lower than 0.05. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was 34.5%, indicating that principals' leadership contributed 34.5% to teachers' work loyalty. Therefore, the better the principals' leadership, the higher the level of teachers' work loyalty at public vocational high schools in Padang Timur District.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the primary factors in improving the quality of human resources. The success of educational implementation is determined not only by the curriculum and educational facilities but also by the quality of teachers as the main actors in the teaching and learning process. Teachers play a strategic role in achieving educational goals through effective instruction, proper classroom management, and the development of students' competencies. Therefore, teachers are expected to demonstrate strong commitment, responsibility, and work loyalty in carrying out their professional duties (Sagala, 2017). This commitment is also emphasized in Law No. 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, which states that teachers are required to perform their professional responsibilities with full responsibility, dedication, and loyalty. Furthermore, Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System stipulates that educators are obligated to create high-quality and sustainable learning processes. Thus, teachers' work loyalty is not only

an organizational necessity for schools but also a professional responsibility in improving the quality of education.

Loyalty refers to an attitude that reflects an individual's affection, faithfulness, and attachment to something they strongly believe in (Juwita & Khalimah, 2021). Loyalty develops from within an individual and cannot be achieved through coercion or material rewards. Hasibuan (2021) defines loyalty as an employee's willingness to protect and defend the organization, both inside and outside the workplace, from various threats that may harm the organization. Similarly, Suhendi (2017, p. 260) argues that work loyalty is reflected in employees' commitment to the organization, which is shaped by factors originating from both the individual and the organization. Aminin (2020) further explains that loyalty is an employee's attitude of faithfulness and obedience to organizational leaders both within and outside the workplace. Kadarwati (2017, p. 108) defines work loyalty as the involvement of individuals' physical, psychological, and social activities that encourage compliance with organizational rules, seriousness in performing duties, and the execution of responsibilities in a meaningful, knowledgeable, and accountable manner, accompanied by consistent dedication to support organizational goals and improve organizational effectiveness. Teachers' work loyalty reflects their faithfulness, commitment, and willingness to make their best contributions to the school. Teachers with high work loyalty demonstrate obedience to school regulations, responsibility in carrying out their duties, dedication to school development, and honesty in performing their professional responsibilities (Riyanti, 2015; Rahman et al., 2023). Such loyalty is manifested through work discipline, active participation in school activities, and sincerity in fulfilling their roles as educators (Eriza, 2017).

One factor that is believed to contribute to improving teachers' work loyalty is principals' leadership. Leadership refers to an individual's ability to influence, direct, guide, make decisions, and motivate organizational members to achieve shared goals (Syahril & Sulastri, 2022). In the school context, principals serve as leaders responsible for creating a conducive working environment, establishing effective communication, involving teachers in decision-making processes, and motivating teachers to perform their duties optimally (Rusihan, 2020; Amelia et al., 2023). Effective principals are expected to build harmonious working relationships that foster teachers' sense of belonging, responsibility, and loyalty toward the school (Gistituati, 2009). According to Siagian (2012), effective leadership is characterized by the ability to influence subordinates, make appropriate decisions, establish effective communication, and motivate organizational members. When these four aspects are implemented effectively, teachers' work loyalty is expected to improve significantly. Nevertheless, various phenomena indicate that principals' leadership practices still face several challenges. Some teachers remain less active in school activities, teacher involvement in decision-making processes has not been optimal, communication is not always effective, and motivational efforts through recognition and support for teachers' performance remain limited. Marpaung et al. (2023) also found that principals' communication continues to be a challenge in school management. In addition, principals need to strengthen their efforts to motivate teachers by providing greater support and recognition to enhance teachers' work loyalty.

In the context of public vocational high schools (SMK Negeri), this study offers novelty by addressing an existing research gap through directly examining the influence of principals' leadership on teachers' work loyalty, a relationship that has more frequently been investigated separately or in association with other variables such as motivation and organizational culture. Furthermore, this study emphasizes more contextual and contemporary leadership indicators that have received limited attention in previous research. Another research gap lies in the limited number of studies conducted at the vocational high school level, particularly in Padang Timur District, and in the limited empirical evidence regarding principals' leadership and teachers' work loyalty. Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be understood that principals' leadership is an important factor that deserves attention in efforts to enhance teachers' work loyalty. Therefore, this study entitled "The Influence of Principals' Leadership on Teachers' Work Loyalty at Public Vocational High Schools in Padang Timur District" was conducted to examine more specifically, contextually, and comprehensively the influence of principals' leadership on teachers' work loyalty.

2. METHOD, DATA, ANALYSIS

This study employed a quantitative approach using a correlational research design to analyze the influence of principals' leadership on teachers' work loyalty. The study population consisted of 166 active teachers, with a sample of 119 respondents determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error through proportional stratified random sampling based on years of service. Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The principals' leadership variable was measured using four indicators: influencing, decision-making, communication, and motivating. Meanwhile,

teachers' work loyalty was measured using four indicators: obedience, responsibility, dedication, and honesty.

Before data collection, the research instrument was tested for validity using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation and for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. The results indicated that all questionnaire items were valid and reliable. Data analysis was conducted descriptively by calculating the mean score and the Respondent Achievement Level (Tingkat Capaian Responden/TCR). Subsequently, prerequisite analyses, including normality and linearity tests, were performed, followed by hypothesis testing using simple linear regression, the t-test, and the coefficient of determination (R^2). All statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 with a significance level of 0.05.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Description of the Teachers' Work Loyalty Variable

Based on the data processing that had been carried out, the research data were analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study. The findings were obtained from the collection and analysis of data gathered through the teachers' work loyalty questionnaire, which consisted of 26 statement items completed by 119 teachers. To provide a more detailed description of teachers' work loyalty, the data are presented according to each indicator in the following table.

Table 1. Teachers' Work Loyalty Respondent Archivement Level

No	Indicator	Mean	TCR (%)	Category
1.	Obdience	4,17	83,4%	Good
2.	Responsibility	4,14	82,8%	Good
3.	Dedication	4,00	80%	Good
4.	Honesty	4,23	84,6%	Good
Overall		4,14	82,8%	Good

Based on the data analysis, the mean score, Respondent Achievement Level (TCR), and category for each indicator were obtained. The obedience indicator achieved a mean score of 4.17 with a TCR of 83.4%, which falls into the good category. The responsibility indicator obtained a mean score of 4.14 with a TCR of 82.8%, also categorized as good. Furthermore, the dedication indicator achieved a mean score of 4.00 with a TCR of 80.0%, indicating a good category. The honesty indicator recorded the highest mean score of 4.23 with a TCR of 84.6%, which was likewise categorized as good. Overall, teachers' work loyalty obtained a mean score of 4.14 with a TCR of 82.8%, indicating a good level. These findings suggest that the work loyalty of teachers at public vocational high schools (SMK Negeri) in Padang Timur District is generally good, as reflected by the indicators of obedience, responsibility, dedication, and honesty.

Description of the Principals' Leadership Variable

Based on the data processing that had been conducted, the research data were analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study. The findings were obtained from the collection and analysis of data gathered through the principals' leadership questionnaire, which consisted of 26 statement items completed by 119 teachers. To provide a more detailed description of principals' leadership, the data are presented according to each indicator in the following table.

Table 1. Principals' Leadership Respondent Archivement Level

No	Indicator	Mean	TCR (%)	Category
1.	Directing	4,54	90,8%	Very Good
2.	Decision Making	4,44	88,8%	Good
3.	Communication	4,50	90%	Very Good
4.	Motivating	4,36	87,2%	Good
Overall		4,46	89,3%	Good

Based on the data analysis, the mean score, Respondent Achievement Level (TCR), and category for each indicator were obtained. The directing indicator achieved a mean score of 4.54 with a TCR of 90.8%, which was categorized as very good. The decision-making indicator obtained a mean score of 4.44 with a TCR of 88.8%, which was categorized as good. In addition, the communication indicator achieved a

mean score of 4.50 with a TCR of 90.0%, placing it in the very good category. The motivating indicator recorded a mean score of 4.36 with a TCR of 87.2%, which was categorized as good. Overall, principals' leadership obtained a mean score of 4.46 with a TCR of 89.2%, indicating a good level. Therefore, it can be concluded that the principals' leadership at public vocational high schools in Padang Timur District is categorized as good, with an overall achievement level of 89.3%, as reflected in the indicators of directing, decision-making, communication, and motivating.

Prerequisite Analysis

Normality Test

Before testing the hypothesis, a normality test was conducted to determine whether the research data were normally distributed. The normality test was performed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov Z test with the assistance of IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. The decision criterion was that if the significance value (Asymp. Sig.) was greater than 0.05, the data were considered to be normally distributed. The results of the normality test are presented in the following table.

Table 2. Normality Test

Principals' Leadership and Teachers' Work Loyalty	
Asymp. Sig	Sig.
0,87	0,05

Based on the results of the normality test, the significance value for variables X and Y was 0.087, which is greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the data for the principals' leadership and teachers' work loyalty variables are normally distributed.

Linearity Test

The linearity test was conducted to determine whether the relationship between the variables was linear. The relationship is considered linear if the significance value is greater than 0.05, indicating a linear regression line. Conversely, if the significance value is less than 0.05, the regression line is considered non-linear. In this study, the linearity test was performed using the ANOVA method. The results of the linearity test are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Linearity Test

Principals' Leadership and Teachers' Work Loyalty	
Sig.	<i>Deviation from Linearity</i>
0,05	0,671

Based on the results of the classical assumption test for linearity, the significance value of Deviation from Linearity was 0.671, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant deviation from linearity between the independent variable (principals' leadership) and the dependent variable (teachers' work loyalty). Therefore, it can be concluded that the relationship between principals' leadership and teachers' work loyalty is linear.

Hypothesis Testing

Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether the independent variable, principals' leadership, has a significant effect on the dependent variable, teachers' work loyalty. The regression equation obtained from the analysis is presented as follows:

Table 4. Simple Linear Regression Result

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Understandadized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	28,562	10.089		2.831	.005
Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah	.679	.086	.588	7.858	.001
Dependent Variable: Loyalitas Kerja Guru					

Based on the regression results presented above, the regression coefficients can be found in the Coefficients table, specifically under the Unstandardized Coefficients (B) column. The constant value is 28.562, while the regression coefficient for the principals' leadership variable is 0.679. Accordingly, the resulting regression equation is: $Y = 28.562 + 0.679X$. The constant value of 28.562 indicates the estimated value of teachers' work loyalty (Y) when the principals' leadership variable (X) remains constant. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient of 0.679 indicates that every one-unit increase in principals' leadership is associated with an increase of 0.679 units in teachers' work loyalty. The positive regression coefficient indicates a positive relationship between principals' leadership and teachers' work loyalty. In other words, the better the principals' leadership, the higher the level of teachers' work loyalty.

Partial Test (t-Test)

The partial (t) test was conducted to determine whether the independent variable (principals' leadership) has a statistically significant individual effect on the dependent variable (teachers' work loyalty). At the 5% significance level, the critical t-value for $N = 119$ was 1.980. The results of the t-test are presented in the following table.

Table 5. T-Test Result

Principals' Leadership and Teachers' Work Loyalty	
t hitung	t tabel
7,858	1,980

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing using the t-test, the calculated t-value was 7.858, which is greater than the critical t-value of 1.980 ($7.858 > 1.980$), with a significance value of 0.001, which is lower than 0.05. These results indicate that the principals' leadership variable has a positive and statistically significant effect on teachers' work loyalty.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated to determine the extent to which the independent variable (principals' leadership) explains the variation in the dependent variable (teachers' work loyalty). The results of the analysis, performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26, are presented in the following table.

Table 6. R2 Test Result

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjust R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,588	,345	,340	10,41837

Based on the results presented above, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.345, indicating that 34.5% of the variance in teachers' work loyalty can be explained by the independent variable, namely principals' leadership. The remaining 65.5% is influenced by other factors that were not examined in this study.

Discussion

The findings indicate that principals' leadership was categorized as good, with a mean score of 116.18 and a Respondent Achievement Level (TCR) of 89.4%. This result reflects the effective implementation of leadership functions, including directing, decision-making, communication, and motivating teachers. Likewise, teachers' work loyalty was also categorized as good, with a mean score of 107.48 and a TCR of 82.8%. These findings suggest that teachers demonstrate a strong commitment and loyalty to their schools. Their loyalty is reflected in their compliance with school regulations, responsibility in carrying out their duties, dedication to school development, and honesty in performing their professional responsibilities.

The simple linear regression analysis produced the equation $Y = 28.562 + 0.679X$, indicating that principals' leadership has a positive effect on teachers' work loyalty. The regression coefficient of 0.679 implies that every one-unit increase in principals' leadership is associated with an increase of 0.679 units in teachers' work loyalty. In other words, the better the principals' leadership, the higher the level of teachers' work loyalty. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing using the t-test showed that the calculated t-value (7.858) was greater than the critical t-value (1.980) ($7.858 > 1.980$), with a significance value of 0.001, which is

lower than 0.05. These results confirm that principals' leadership has a positive and statistically significant effect on teachers' work loyalty. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that principals' leadership significantly influences teachers' work loyalty is accepted. The magnitude of the influence of principals' leadership on teachers' work loyalty is reflected by the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.345 or 34.5%. This indicates that 34.5% of the variation in teachers' work loyalty can be explained by principals' leadership, while the remaining 65.5% is attributable to other factors not included in this study. Nevertheless, this percentage demonstrates that principals' leadership is an important factor in enhancing teachers' work loyalty.

The findings also reveal that principals who provide clear direction, make appropriate decisions, establish effective communication, and motivate teachers are more likely to foster higher levels of teachers' work loyalty. Teachers who perceive effective leadership tend to demonstrate greater compliance with school regulations, stronger responsibility in carrying out their duties, greater dedication to school development, and higher levels of honesty in performing their professional responsibilities. Therefore, principals' leadership plays a strategic role in fostering teachers who are loyal and committed to achieving school goals. These findings are consistent with Wahjosumidjo (2022), who argues that school principals, as educational leaders, play a vital role in directing, influencing, and mobilizing all school resources to achieve educational objectives. Likewise, the findings support Mulyasa (2019), who states that effective school leadership contributes to improving teachers' commitment, motivation, and loyalty in carrying out their professional responsibilities. Therefore, the more effective the principals' leadership, the higher the level of teachers' work loyalty.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that principals' leadership at public vocational high schools (SMK Negeri) in Padang Timur District was categorized as good, with a mean score of 116.18 and a Respondent Achievement Level (TCR) of 89.3%. Similarly, teachers' work loyalty was also categorized as good, with a mean score of 107.48 and a TCR of 82.8%. The prerequisite analyses confirmed that the data satisfied the assumptions required for regression analysis, as the data were normally distributed and exhibited a linear relationship. The simple linear regression analysis produced the equation $Y = 28.562 + 0.679X$, indicating that every improvement in principals' leadership is associated with an increase in teachers' work loyalty. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing revealed that principals' leadership has a positive and statistically significant effect on teachers' work loyalty, with a calculated t-value of 7.858, which exceeded the critical t-value of 1.980, and a significance value of 0.001, which is lower than 0.05. The coefficient of determination showed that principals' leadership contributed 34.5% to the variation in teachers' work loyalty, while the remaining 65.5% was explained by other factors beyond the scope of this study.

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