

## Leadership of Public Vocational High School Principals in Koto Tengah District of Padang City

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine and obtain information about the principal's ability to mobilize, direct, motivate and influence teachers. This type of research is quantitative descriptive research. The research population was all teachers at the State Vocational High School in Koto Tengah District as many as 78 people with a research sample of 67 people taken based on the Stratified Proportional Random Sampling technique. The instrument used is a questionnaire with a Likert scale model that has been tested for validity and reliability. Data collection techniques using the average formula (mean) and TCR calculation. The results showed that the principal's ability to mobilize teachers was good with an average (mean) of 4.04 and TCR 80.8%, the principal's ability to direct teachers was good with an average (mean) of 4.08 and TCR 81.7%, the principal's ability to motivate teachers was quite good with an average (mean) of 3.96 and TCR 79.3 and the principal's ability to influence teachers was good with an average (mean) of 4.34 and TCR 86.9%). Overall, the leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang City (mean 4.10 and TCR 82.1%) is in the good category. So the leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang City has a good ability to mobilize, direct, and influence teachers, but principals need to improve their ability to motivate teachers.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In modern times like now education is a major factor in improving the quality of human resources and the progress of a nation. Education aims to develop individual potential both in intellectual, emotional and social aspects. Education aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who have faith and devotion to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens (Julfandriansyah & Sabandi, 2023). To achieve these educational goals, there are several supporting factors, one of which is the role of a leader in the world of education. Educational leaders are expected to be able to mobilize all elements in order to achieve educational goals effectively.

In the world of education, a leader plays a big role in achieving the goals and success of education. According to Pasaolong in Syahril and Sulastri (2022), leaders are individuals who hold the highest position in an organization or institution where these individuals have the competence in the form of abilities and skills to influence, move, direct, guide and motivate the people they lead to always think, act and behave well and consistently to support the achievement of organizational or institutional goals. According to

Djumadiono and Sari (2021) leaders are individuals who have the ability and power to command others who are under them. So a leader is someone who is at the top level who has the ability to influence others and has the power to give orders to subordinates.

A leader must have a leadership spirit within him. Leadership is some of the characteristics possessed by individuals who can encourage other individuals to achieve the goals they want to achieve (Maryodona, 2021). A similar opinion was conveyed by Yukl in Yohanah, (2022) leadership is the process of influencing, motivating and directing and enabling others to participate and contribute in the process of achieving goals. Another opinion is also conveyed by Wahjosumidjo (2011), leadership is an individual personality that is able to inspire others to emulate or follow it. So leadership is the ability to influence subordinates in order to create cooperation in achieving organizational goals.

According to Wahjosumidjo (2011) leadership is an individual personality that is able to inspire others to emulate or follow it. He emphasized that leadership includes several main indicators, namely the ability to move, direct, motivate and empower individuals or groups. Furthermore, Rahmi and Jarkawi (2023) in their book stated that leadership involves several skills and qualities used by a leader to inspire, guide, and direct organizational members in achieving the vision and mission that has been set. Rivai (2012) added that leadership is basically a process of influencing or setting an example by leaders to subordinates in order to achieve common goals. Leadership includes aspects of influencing, motivating and directing people by fostering and respecting and cooperation so that people are eager to achieve common goals. Meanwhile, Wahyudi (2012) defines leadership as the ability to mobilize, direct and influence the mindset and way of working of members to be able to be independent and productive.

Leaders in the field of education, especially in primary and secondary education, are called principals. According to Kadarsih et al. (2020), principals are not just teachers who are given the task of running or managing schools, but principals also regulate how all members/individuals in the school carry out their respective duties and responsibilities. As a leader, the principal must have the ability, expertise and skills to manage the school he leads.

Principals in carrying out their duties as a leader will certainly continue to interact with teachers (educators) and education personnel involved in organizing learning activities in schools with the aim of creating a conducive learning environment to produce quality students (Syahril & Sulastrri, 2022). Therefore, principals as leaders are expected to influence, mobilize, direct, guide and motivate teachers in order to carry out their duties and responsibilities as educators in schools. Meanwhile, what is meant by principal leadership according to Greenfield in Sulastrri et al. (2021) is an activity carried out by the principal to create teacher productivity that can improve student learning achievement. This means that the principal's leadership has an important role in increasing the enthusiasm of teachers in carrying out their duties so as to create a harmonious and pleasant working atmosphere. This makes teachers more motivated in guiding students in both academic and non-academic fields.

According to Sana and Effane (2023) a good leader is a leader who understands that trust is based on the judgment of others. Teachers as the spearhead of learning implementation who often interact directly with the principal. So that their perceptions can provide an accurate picture of how the principal's leadership is carried out. Perception is a process that begins with sensing, where there is a stimulus received by humans through their five senses (Hakim et al., 2021). Teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership will vary from one another. This teacher's perception can provide an accurate picture of how the principal's leadership is. Thus, it can be said that teacher perceptions are important to be able to see how the principal's leadership is. Because by understanding the teacher's perception, it is expected to provide input for improving the quality of the principal's leadership.

The principal as a leader in the school must be able to direct all personnel in the school to work together to achieve school goals (Kadarsih et al., 2020). As a leader, the principal must be able to demonstrate his responsibility by optimizing the utilization of existing resources in the school. As stated by Syahril and Sulastrri (2022), the principal is a teaching leader in schools who must be able to influence, direct, guide and motivate teachers to carry out their duties properly. However, in reality, principals sometimes have not been able to carry out these responsibilities optimally.

When viewed from the author's initial observations at the State Vocational High School in Koto Tangah District, Padang City, it can be seen that there are still teachers who violate existing rules at school such as being late for class and often leaving class during teaching hours, especially when the principal is not at school, and teachers feel that the principal does not provide clear direction to teachers, especially in the use of digital learning platforms. This is in line with research conducted by Kurniawan and Sabandi (2023) which shows that the principal's ability to direct teachers has not been well implemented so that principals need to further improve their ability to direct teachers.

Based on this, the author suspects that there are problems regarding the principal's ability to direct teachers, especially in providing direction about the rules and methods of teaching teachers. Because as a leader, the principal must be able to lead all elements in the school, especially teachers. The principal must be able to provide clear directions to teachers so that it is hoped that there will be no teachers who violate existing rules. However, from the results of the author's initial observations at the State Vocational High School in Koto Tengah District, in fact the principal has not been fully able to provide maximum direction to teachers. This can be seen from the phenomena that appear related to the principal's leadership among them: 1) Principals have not been able to provide clear direction on teacher teaching methods, 2) Not optimal assistance provided by the principal to teachers, especially in the learning process, 3) The principal has not provided maximum encouragement/support to teachers in teaching.

The purpose of this study was to determine and obtain information about the Leadership of the Principal of State Vocational High School in Koto Tengah Sub-district, Padang City based on the ability to move, direct, motivate and influence as seen from the perceptions of teachers.

## 2. METHOD, DATA, ANALYSIS

This type of research is quantitative descriptive research. The population amounted to 78 people with a sample of 67 people taken based on stratified proportional random sampling technique. The instrument in the form of a questionnaire with a Likert scale model has been tested for validity and reliability. The data analysis technique uses the average formula (mean) and TCR (Respondent Achievement Rate)

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The results of data processing regarding the leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang city in this study are viewed from the aspects of moving, directing, motivating and influencing. The following table shows the results of data processing from the leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang city.

**Table 1.** Recapitulation of the average score of the leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang city

| No      | Indicator   | Average | TCR (%) | Category    |
|---------|-------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| 1       | Drive       | 4,04    | 80,8    | Good        |
| 2       | Directing   | 4,08    | 81,7    | Good        |
| 3       | Motivating  | 3,96    | 79,3    | Good Enough |
| 4       | Influencing | 4,34    | 86,9    | Good        |
| Average |             | 4,10    | 82,1    | Good        |

Good Based on table 1. it can be seen that the average achievement level of the leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang City is 4.10 and TCR 82.1% which is in the good category. It can be seen that the highest score achievement is in the indicator of influence with an average of 4.34 and TCR 86.9% in the good category. While the lowest level of score achievement is in the indicator of motivating with an average of 3.96 and TCR 79.3% with a fairly good category. So overall, the average leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang city is in the good category.

### Discussion

Discussion In this section, a discussion of the research results regarding the Leadership of State Vocational High School Principals in Koto Tengah District, Padang City will be presented. The discussion of the results of this study will be described based on four research indicators, namely mobilizing, directing, motivating and influencing. For more details, the discussion of the research results is explained as follows:

- a. Principal's Ability to Mobilize Teachers at State Vocational High Schools in Koto Tengah District

In general, the principal's ability to mobilize teachers in public vocational high schools in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang City is already in the good category. This can be seen from the acquisition of an average of 4.04 and a TCR of 80.8% which is in the good category. Of the several items raised on the indicator of driving, there are items with high scores on the sub-indicator of conducting development, namely "principals encourage teachers to attend training/workshops" indicating that principals are quite active in encouraging the development of teacher competence with an average score of 4.23 and TCR 84.8% which is in the good category. This can be seen from the direction from the principal to attend workshops and training organized by the education office or other external parties. Conversely, the lowest score is in the sub-indicator of giving awards, namely "the principal gives awards to teachers who succeed in improving student competence in the vocational field" with an average score of 3.17 and TCR 63.3% which is in the good enough category.

The low score obtained on the sub-indicator of giving awards indicates that the principal has not been fully optimal in implementing the appreciation strategy for teacher performance. Appreciation has a significant influence on improving teacher performance and motivation (Husnunnadia & Masyithot, 2024). Appreciation given by principals to teachers can be a driving factor to increase morale in the educational environment. Wahjosumidjo (2011) asserts that principals have a strategic role in mobilizing teachers to achieve organizational goals through rewarding the performance achieved.

Thus, although the indicators of mobilizing are generally in the good category, the head needs to focus more on the aspect of giving awards in order to create an appreciative and motivating work environment. This effort is important to establish a productive work culture and support the improvement of the quality of education in vocational schools.

**b. Principal's Ability to Direct Teachers in State Vocational High Schools in Koto Tengah District**

In general, the principal's ability to direct teachers in public vocational high schools in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang City is already in the good category as seen from the average score of 4.08 and TCR 81.7%. This shows that the principal has carried out the role of directing teachers which is quite optimal. Of the several items put forward on the directing indicator, there is an item with a high score on the sub-indicator providing an explanation, namely "the principal always provides a clear and detailed explanation before implementing the program" obtaining an average score of 4.38 and TCR 87.7% in the good category. This statement indicates that the principal has shown clarity in communication and has careful planning before implementing the program. On the other hand, the lowest score in the sub-indicator provides an overview, namely "the principal directly guides teachers in using the digitas learning platform: with an average score of 3.8 and TCR of 76.1% which is in the good enough category.

This low score indicates that the principal is still not optimal in providing direct guidance related to the use of learning technology. This can be caused by the principals' limited time to assist teachers directly and the unevenness of the principals' digitasl competencies. To overcome this, principals need to take strategic steps such as developing a technology assistance program and taking the time periodically to provide direct guidance to teachers. In addition, principals can also improve their digital literacy to be a good role model for teachers. According to Mulyasa (2013), school principals act as academic supervisors in charge of providing guidance and direction to teachers in carrying out their duties, including in dealing with technological changes in education.

Thus, although the overall directing indicator is in the good category, principals still need to increase direct involvement in directing the use of digitas programs. This is important given the growing demands of the digitasization of education in the teaching and learning process.

**c. Principals' Ability to Motivate Teachers at State Vocational High Schools in Koto Tengah District**

In general, the principal's ability to motivate teachers in public vocational high schools in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang City is in the good enough category. This can be seen from the acquisition of an average of 3.96 and a TCR of 79.3% which is in the good enough category. Of the several items raised in the motivating indicator, there is an item with the highest score in the inspiring sub-indicator, namely "the principal fosters a spirit of innovation and creativity in the school environment" with an average score of 4.47 and TCR 89.5% which is in the good category.

This shows that the principal is quite successful in creating a work environment that supports teacher innovation. That is, there is leadership that is responsive to teachers' needs. Based on the score, it is expected that the principal can maintain or can increase the spirit of teacher innovation at school. The statement with the lowest score is in the competition sub-indicator, namely "the principal holds an award program for teachers with the best learning innovations every semester" with an average score of 3.28 and

TCR of 67.7% in the good enough category. This shows that awards for teachers who innovate have not been part of the principal's policy or program. Riski et al. (2024) in their research emphasized that low teacher motivation is often caused by the lack of tangible rewards from the principal. The low score on the statement can be caused by the absence of a structured and sustainable reward system in schools. As a solution, principals need to design routine and transparent reward programs such as awarding certificates, publishing teacher innovations in internal school media and simple incentives as a form of motivation.

It can be concluded that the principal's ability to motivate teachers in public vocational high schools in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang city is in the good enough category. This shows that principals need to improve teachers' work motivation through planning and implementing more targeted strategies. This is important because teacher motivation is one of the keys to successful education.

d. Principals' Ability to Influence Teachers at State Vocational High Schools in Koto Tengah District

In general, the principal's ability to influence teachers in public vocational high schools in Koto Tengah District, Padang City is in the good category. This can be seen from the acquisition of an average of 4.34 and TCR 86.9% which is in the good category. Of the several items raised in the influence indicator, there is an item with the highest score in the sub-indicator of good and effective communication, namely "the principal uses polite language and respects every interaction" with an average of 4.58 and TCR 91.6% which is in the very good category. This indicates that the principal's communication is effective and humanistic. However, the lowest score is found in the sub indicator of building trust, namely "The principal is always consistent with words and actions" with an average score of 4.19 and TCR 83.8%, although it is in the good category but this statement is still lower than other statements on the indicator of influence.

The low score on the statement can be caused by the lack of internalization of integrity values in leadership practices, causing principals to not always be able to align their words and actions consistently. Another cause is the high administrative and bureaucratic pressure that often forces principals to make decisions that may not be in accordance with the previous statement. According to Rivai (2009), leaders who are inconsistent between words and actions will lose credibility in the eyes of their subordinates, which in turn can reduce the motivation and performance of the staff they lead. To overcome this, school principals need to attend professional development training, especially in the aspect of leadership with integrity. This training is important so that principals can understand the importance of consistency and be a good role model for teachers and students. This is in line with Mulyasa's opinion (2013) in his book *Becoming a Professional Principal*, namely that the principal as a leader must be able to become a model figure for teachers, students and all school residents, especially in attitudes, speech and actions that reflect integrity.

It can be concluded that the leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang City based on the aspect of influence is already in the good category, but it needs to be strengthened in the aspects of integrity and exemplary in daily actions. Through leadership training and open communication culture, it is expected that principals can improve consistency and exemplary figures that can influence teachers and staff and students in schools.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the leadership of public vocational high school principals in the Koto Tengah sub-district of Padang City is already in the good category, with an average score of 4.10 and TCR 82.1%. When viewed in detail, the indicator with the highest score is the influence indicator which obtained an average score of 4.34 and TCR 86.9% which is in the good category. This shows that the principal has been quite successful in influencing teachers and school members through good and effective communication, understanding team members and building trust. Conversely, the indicator with the lowest score is the motivating indicator, with an average score of 3.96 and a TCR of 79.3% which is in the good enough category. These results indicate that there are still weaknesses in the principal in building enthusiasm, encouragement and inspiration for teachers in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. Principals still need to improve their ability to motivate teachers so that principals are not only able to influence communicationally, but also able to mobilize the potential and enthusiasm of teachers' work to the fullest..

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