
Does Leadership Effectiveness Matter for Indonesia Vocational Teacher Performance? The Mediating Role of Work Motivation

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Abstract

Enhancing teacher performance is a global challenge and understanding managerial sides, and motivation can be used to deal with this issue. The purpose of this study aimed at examining the impact of leadership effectiveness and teacher performance in vocational school, as well as investigating the role of work motivation. A quantitative method was adopted to improve understanding of this phenomenon. The participants of this study were recruited from the vocational school teachers in East Java by distributing online questionnaires employing WhatsApp. The findings of this study showed that effective leadership positively influenced both work motivation and teacher performance. Indeed, work motivation can explain the relationship between effective leadership and vocational teacher performance. Based on the results, it is recommended to the education office, school principals, vocational teachers to pay more attention to the effectiveness of leadership, and work motivation to improve teacher performance. This study recommends that school principals and educational policymakers pay attention to the matters of leadership and work motivation as the essential factor in driving teacher performance.

Keywords

Educational quality, leadership effectiveness, teacher performance, work motivation

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Introduction

In the recent few decades, teacher performance has gained attention among scholars as its role in guiding students (Suratman et al., 2020; Wulandari et al., 2021). Some scholars believe that teachers play a strategic role in the driving education goal in a nation (Kohli, 2019; Al Kadri & Widiawati, 2020). Teacher performance includes all activities shown by the teacher in carrying out the mandate to educate, guide, direct and facilitate the teaching and learning process (Louws et al., 2017). The implication of the teachers who have high performance is that they are more likely driving into better knowledge in guiding learners to achieve their accomplishment and vice versa (Suswanto et al., 2017; Muazza, 2021). Some of the works of the literature showed a robust correlation between the teacher performance and the students' achievement (Heck, 2007; Harris & Sass, 2011; Ojimba, 2013). For this reason, owning a high-staging teacher is essential for improving the standard of education in a nation (Irmayani et al., 2018; Noaman et al., 2017).

Considering this matter, the Indonesian government has provided a certification program for the teacher to secure the grade of education. The teacher certification consists of four components, including personal, pedagogical, professional and social competence that need to be mastered by the teachers and those components reflects to the teachers' performance (Harjanto et al., 2018; Kusumawardhani, 2017). However, in the implementation, almost a half participant of the teacher certification program of vocational school teacher failed in the first final test (Wijaya et al., 2021). In particular, the teacher performance is being an issue which predicts the cause of the students' achievement, which has experienced a downward trend, particularly in the vocational school in East Java of Indonesia (Wulandari et al., 2021). The vulnerable teacher performance unquestionably concerns some parties, including parents, educators, headmasters, and principal of city/municipality education offices, as well as policymakers. Therefore, there is a need for a greater understanding of what factors affecting teacher performance to overcome to this issue.

Some literature on the study on this theme is associated teacher performance with the leadership of school principals (Sukmawati et al., 2019; Hanipah et al., 2020; Wulandari et al., 2021). In the context of the school, the principal has a crucial role in managing the school and has high effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2020). The principal, as a leader, have good administrative skills, high commitment, and create a conducive environment to support teacher performance and student achievement (Ford et al., 2019). Effective principal leadership can be seen from the ability to empower teachers to carry out the learning process well and improve their performance (Shulhan, 2018; Hartiwi et al., 2020). From the management study perspectives, the study on teacher performance is often linked with employee performance and it has examined by scholars in both developed and developing countries with various subject studies. For example, Buil et al. (2019); Pawirosumarto et al. (2017) have investigated the role of leadership on the hotel employee performance. Furthermore, Jiang et al. (2017) and Li et al. (2015) pointed out a robust correlation between transformational leadership and sustainable employee performance in China. In the banking sector, Siahaan (2017) showed that leadership plays an essential role in employee job

satisfaction in Indonesia. Other studies indicated that employee performance is associated with the effectiveness of leadership (Chen & Silverthorne, 2005; Lekka & Healey, 2012; Zeb et al., 2018).

In addition, some studies found a correlation work motivation can predict employee performance (Widagdo et al., 2018; Prabowo et al., 2018). Work motivation is a potential force within a human being, which can be developed by several external forces that revolve around monetary rewards and non-monetary rewards that can affect their performance results positively or negatively depending on the situation and conditions faced by the person concerned (Osabiya, 2015; Rida & Siddiqui, 2019). Motivation can come from a person or what is often known as internal motivation and external motivation (Locke & Schattke, 2019). A preliminary study by Dartey-Baah and Amoako (2011) provides several indicators affecting motivation, including achievement, recognition, responsibility, progress, the work itself and the possibility of growth. When workers have high motivation to achieve their personal goals, then it drives to performance as well as increase organizational performance. Thus, increasing the motivation of workers will improve the performance of individuals, groups, and organizations so that they can achieve the organizational targets that have been set (Idowu, 2017; Andriani et al., 2018).

Since the escalating studies on employee performance, however, a small number of studies which focuses on teacher performance, particularly in Indonesia. The majority study focused on the teacher certification program as the factor in increasing teacher performance (Kusumawardhani, 2017; Habibi et al., 2019; Suratman et al., 2020; Wijaya et al., 2021). Therefore, raising the theme of teacher performance as a central theme and critical research variables, such as leadership effectiveness as antecedent variables and work motivation as mediating important and relevant variables. Adapting concepts that are generally used in management for education will provide another perception in understanding the factors that affect teacher performance. This study aimed at understanding the role of leadership effectiveness and work motivation in determining teacher performance. This study proposed three contributions. First, this research provided an insight into the current literature on management studies by establishing teacher as the subject of the research, which largely missing in the prior studies. Second, the study provided a model of teacher performance by testing the antecedent factors that influence it both directly (e.g., organizational justice, and leadership effectiveness) or indirectly through internal motivation. With the creation of a teacher performance model, this research was forecasted to impart to the school headmasters, the city/municipality and provincial policymakers, so that they can make the right policies for performance improvement.

Literature Review

The literature on leadership has been highlighted among scholars as having a crucial role in managing and determining success in an organization or institution (Eliyana & Ma'arif, 2019; Swanson et al., 2020). A contingency model by Fiedler (1978) explained that effective leadership is showing by the interaction between organizational situations and circumstances with the tendency of the relationship between leaders and employees. A more effective leader is task-oriented leadership, while the most preferred leadership of employees

is human-oriented leadership (Taberner et al., 2009). Silverthorne (2001) pointed three primary components which show leadership effectiveness, including task structure, and position power. Additionally, Pillai and Williams (1998); Lone and Lone (2018) remarked that leadership effectiveness consists of three dimensions, namely developing followership, achieving results, and team playing. According to Michaud et al. (2020), leadership effectiveness has three main variables that are very influential, namely the nature of the task, the relationship between leaders and subordinates, and the power inherent in the position of leader. From the previous literature, effective leadership can be concluded as an activity in forming interactions to influence others through a systematic mindset, effective in decision making and communicating the results of thought (Kurucay & Inan, 2017; Huguet, 2017). Additionally, it can increase participation in problem-solving and being able to increase morale and be able to explore the creativity of employees. This makes an employee want and motivates to work together to achieve the goals that have been set together. Several studies also confirmed a relationship between leadership effectiveness and work motivation (Asrar-ul-Haq & Kuchinke, 2016; Buble et al., 2014; Gooraki et al., 2013).

In the school context, the principal has a crucial role in managing the school and has high effectiveness (Liu & Hallinger, 2018). The principal as a leader must have good administrative skills, high commitment, and create a conducive environment to support teacher performance and student achievement (Ford et al., 2019). Effective principal leadership can be seen from the ability to empower teachers to carry out the learning process well and improve their performance (Shulhan, 2018; Hartiwi et al., 2020). In more precise, some preliminary scholars by Fisher and Robbins (2015); Cragg and Spurgeon (2018) noted several competencies of a leader should be able to: (a) create a vision, (b) define a strategy that is to have a comprehensive understanding of strengths, weaknesses, work performance. (c) set professional standards of work performance, (d) delegate authority, (e) freedom and resources, (f) lead the collective management process, (g) set standards for reciprocal information systems that are natural, (h) create a superstructure success and setting roles and goals and recruiting and training and pooling individual strengths.

Furthermore, Lourmpas and Dakopoulou (2014) prove that leaders in educational institutions, especially principals, influence most teachers, especially in teacher research performance. In this term, the government policies can assist the development of innovative activities by supporting leaders and equipping them with the necessary knowledge on how to exploit motivation for best results in the school community (Clarke & Higgs, 2016). The factors that influence a person's work motivation in carrying out work are influenced by several factors, both internal and intrinsic factors originating from psychological processes within a person and from external and extrinsic factors originating from outside one's self. In addition to work motivation, a recent systematic literature review concluded that leadership effectiveness is associated with employee performance. For example, Chen and Silverthorne (2005) showed a correlation between leadership effectiveness and employee job satisfaction in Taiwan. Additionally, Pradeep and Prabhu (2011) mentioned that leadership effective could enhance job performance in public and private sector enterprises. Buil et al. (2019); Pawirosumarto et al. (2017) have investigated the role of leadership on hotel employee performance. Other studies showed that employee performance is associated with the effectiveness of leadership (Lekka & Healey, 2012; Zeb et al., 2018).

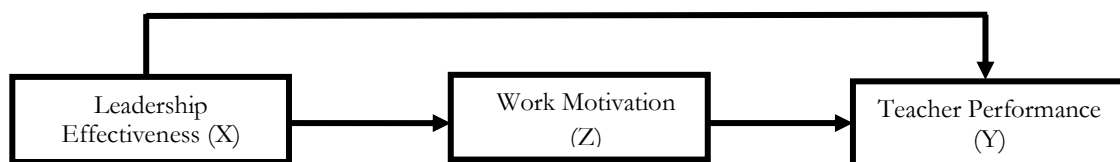
In addition, some studies found a correlation work motivation can predict employee performance (Widagdo et al., 2018; Prabowo et al., 2018). Leadership effectiveness has a significant influence on employee work motivation. Organizations must encourage their leaders to continue to apply styles that encourage motivation to obtain the best results from employees. In addition, Conchie (2013) identified that work motivation mediates the relationship between leadership and employee behaviour. The mediating role of intrinsic motivation depends on the level of employee confidence in their leader. Intrinsic employee motivation is essential for the effectiveness of the leader's efforts to promote some but not all forms of behaviour. Therefore, the hypotheses are: (1) H1. Leadership effectiveness influences vocational teacher performance, (2) H2. Leadership effectiveness can explain vocational teacher work motivation, (3) H3. Work motivation has an impact on vocational teacher performance, (5) H4. Work motivation mediates the link between leadership effectiveness and vocational teacher performance

Methodology

Research design, site, and participants

A quantitative method was adopted to conduct this exploratory study. The participant of this study was recruited from the vocational school teachers in East Java. The concerned study in East Java of Indonesia is reasonable, giving consideration to the vocational schools in East Java that have abundant educational prerequisites instead of other areas. The work was conducted from January to May 2020 by using online questionnaires. The initial sample was about 400 participants; however, approximately 350 valid questionnaires can be used for further analysis. From the returned questionnaires, it was known that the respondents were slightly dominated by female teachers (51.42%) instead of male teacher (48.58%) and with the primary education was graduates from a bachelor degree. Additionally, the respondents had about 10 to 20 working experiences. The respondents engaged in this study were the vocational school teachers who had at least five years working experience. Participants were asked to respond using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for “strongly disagree” and 5 for “strongly agree”. The framework of the study was developed from prior literature review and preliminary relevant research. The detail of this research is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *Research framework*



Data collection and analysis

There are three variables in this study, namely leadership effectiveness as an independent variable, work motivation as a mediator variable and teacher performance as a

dependent variable. In this study, teacher performance was measured according to Law No. 14 of 2005 on teacher and lecturer. It consists of four components, including personal, pedagogical, professional and social competence that need to be mastered by the teachers (Bakar, 2018). In detail, to measure teacher performance includes six items for pedagogical competence, three items for personal competence, two items for social competence and two items for professional competence. In addition, work motivation was measured by three-dimension including work and external motivation with eight items adopted from Herzberg et al. (1959); Sopiah (2008). Lastly, to measure the leadership effectiveness, we adopted items from Pillai and Williams (1998) which pointed on three dimensions, including developing followership (four items), achieving results (five items) and team playing (four items). In detail, the collected data were analysis undergoing descriptive analysis and inferential analysis (with path analysis). This study also followed several stages of test of the classical assumption calculation, covering normality estimation, multicollinearity calculation, and heteroscedasticity test.

Ethical consideration

In this study, to ensure the ethical issues, our respondents were asked for their anonymity while filling the questionnaires. We asked our respondents not to mention their real identities in filling the questionnaire.

Findings and Discussion

Table 1 illustrates the summary of the hypothesis estimation undergoing regression analysis. According to table 1, the value of standardized beta coefficient of the first variable (X_1) is 0.713, with a sig t-value = 0.000 < 0.05. It implies that the first hypothesis is accepted. The second and third hypotheses showed the standardized beta coefficient 0.678 and 0.208, respectively. The findings indicated that the variables involved in this study could elucidate the dependent variable. In addition, leadership effectiveness had a positive and significant indirect effect on performance through teacher work motivation of 0.148. In this case, work motivation played as a partial mediating because the indirect effect of leadership effectiveness on performance through work motivation is smaller than the direct effect of leadership effectiveness on teacher performance of 0.678.

Table 1. *The summary of results analysis*

| | Variables | Direct Impact | Indirect Effect | Total | Sig. | Decision |
|----|------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|
| H1 | LE → WM | .713 | - | .713 | .000 | confirmed |
| H2 | LE → TP | .678 | - | .678 | .000 | confirmed |
| H3 | WP → TP | .208 | - | .208 | .000 | confirmed |
| H4 | LE → WP → TP | .713 | .078 | .148 | | confirmed |

Note: LE = leadership effectiveness; WM = work motivation; TP = teacher performance

The results of the study proved that the leadership effectiveness of principals was highly perceived by vocational school teachers. Leadership effectiveness is proxied by followership, achieving results, and team playing (Pillai & Williams, 1998). Developing followership has several characteristics, including the existence of increased employee knowledge, maintaining employee enthusiasm, leaders can move employees, leaders can control emotions well. Also, achieving results were indicated by achieving targets set, using authority to achieve goals, being able to control employees well, being able to push employees to achieve targets set, setting high targets on others. Lastly, the teams playing were explained by several indicators, namely accepting other people's input as consideration, able to communicate well with everyone, leaders can build close relationships with employees, leaders support or motivate employees well.

On the other hand, motivation was measured by two dimensions: intrinsic motivation (achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement) and extrinsic motivation (interpersonal relations, company policy and administration, supervision, salary, working conditions). The study showed that the teacher had a high work motivation which showing by an excellent emotional relationship among co-workers, between teachers and leaders, and between teachers and students, including with students' parents; school administrations that support teacher performance did not actually hinder teacher performance; intended to help teachers grow and develop not supervision to look for mistakes, teachers feel adequate with salary and other income besides the salary earned, teachers are satisfied with working conditions, working conditions include physical (work facilities or infrastructure) and work climate or psychological atmosphere conducive (external motivation dimension). The characteristics of teachers who have high internal motivation, including proud of work as a teacher, proud of work achievements obtained, proud of having received recognition from leaders, co-workers, students, proud of being given responsibilities in accordance with the position, proud of being given the opportunity and being supported to enhance teachers' personal and professional competency. Teacher performance is perceived high by school headmasters and they have good personal, pedagogical, social, and professional competencies.

Leadership effectiveness and work motivation

An initial objective of this study was to investigate the role of leadership effectiveness toward work motivation of vocational teacher in Indonesia. The current study confirmed the findings of prior studies by Asrar-ul-Haq and Kuchinke (2016); Buble et al. (2014); Gooraki et al. (2013); Mihrez and Thoyib (2015), that leadership effectiveness positively influences work motivation of teachers. Leadership effectiveness tended to have power over certain traits and show certain leadership behaviours or styles. Effective leadership is a key analyst of success or failure in organizational performance (Madanchian et al., 2017). Additionally, the principal as a leader has good administrative skills, high commitment, and create a conducive environment to support teacher performance and student achievement (Ford et al., 2019). Effective principal leadership can be seen from the ability to empower teachers to carry out the learning process well and improve their performance (Shulhan, 2018; Hartiwi et al., 2020). These results indicated that the effective

leadership was an activity in shaping interactions as an effort to influence others, through systematic thinking, effective decision making, communicating thought results, increasing participation in problem-solving and being able to increase work morale and be able to explore employee creativity so want to work together to achieve the goals set together. Leadership effectiveness is the achievement of leaders in completing one or several tasks, and leadership effectiveness can also be seen from the satisfaction obtained by the followers (Gibson et al., 2016). Additionally, Michaud et al. (2020) revealed that the effectiveness of leadership has three namely the nature of the task (what must be done), the relationship between leaders and subordinates, and the power inherent in the position of leader.

Work motivation and teacher performance

The findings of this research indicated that work motivation could explain teacher performance. Motivation can primarily come from a person or what is often known as internal motivation and external motivation. These motivational factors can have a positive or negative impact on a teacher. According to prior studies by Dartey-Baah and Amoako (2011) documented that several indicators affecting motivation, including achievement, recognition, responsibility, progress, the work itself and the possibility of growth. This implies that teachers who have high motivation to achieve their personal goals will lead to better performance, as well as enhance organizational performance. Thus, increasing the motivation of workers will improve the performance of individuals, groups, and organizations so that they can achieve the organizational targets that have been set (Idowu, 2017; Andriani et al., 2018). This result is in agreement with some antecedent studies in the management field which proves that the motivation influences employee performance (Widagdo et al., 2018; Prabowo et al., 2018; Shazadi et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2013). Markovits et al. (2007). In detail, Haryono et al. (2020) remarked that performance is determined by ability, motivation, and environmental factors. There are three characteristics of teacher work motivation, such as business, teachers who have high work motivation show the maximum strength of teachers' work behaviour in their workplace, which involves a variety of activities both tangible and visible. The real effort made by the teacher can provided in the form of starting of designing learning, implementing learning using approaches, strategies, methods, models, teaching materials, appropriate learning media, and evaluating learning accurately. Job aspects includes intrinsic motivation: achievement (recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement) and extrinsic motivation (interpersonal relations, company policy/administration, supervision, salary, working conditions), both intrinsic and extrinsic that affect performance. If the teacher feels these two aspects are fulfilled, then the teacher will perform optimally.

Leadership effectiveness and teacher performance

The results of the study prove that leadership effectiveness has a significant positive effect on performance. The more effective the leadership of vocational school principals, the better the teacher performance. The result supports numerous previous studies, for instance, Madanchian et al. (2017), Danisman et al. (2015), which mentioned that leadership

effectiveness is the key to successful organizational performance. Other studies showed that employee performance is associated with the effectiveness of leadership (Chen & Silverthorne, 2005; Lekka & Healey, 2012; Zeb et al., 2018). Effective leadership of school principals has the characteristics of increasing teacher knowledge. The teacher is always updated with his knowledge so that it always grows and develops, adjusting to the development of student characteristics and environmental demands, including advances in technology and knowledge. In addition, the principal plays a role in maintaining teacher enthusiasm. Finally, the headmasters can promote the teacher to perform optimally. If these dimensions are met, then the teacher's performance will be maximal.

Leadership effectiveness, work motivation and teacher performance

The results of the research proved work motivation as partial mediating in the relationship between leadership effectiveness and vocational school teacher performance. The findings of this research support the research of Lourmpas and Dakopoulou (2014), which remarked leaders in educational institutions, especially principals, influence the majority of teachers, especially in teacher research performance. National policy can help the development of innovative activities by supporting leaders and equipping them with the necessary knowledge about how to exploit motivation for the best results in the school community. Indeed, Mihrez and Thoyib (2015) proves that leadership behaviour has a positive and significant influence on intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and employee performance. Similarly, Schwarz et al. (2016), work motivation mediates the effect of servant leadership on employee performance. The results are consistent with theoretical predictions that altruistic behaviour displayed by Servant leadership raises a higher level of altruistic behaviour that characterizes public service motivation, which in turn increases employee performance. Thus, it can be concluded that effective headmaster's leadership drives teacher performance undergoing their work motivation. The variables of work motivation and leadership effectiveness of school headmasters are both crucial variables and should be considered to improve teacher performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations/Implications

This present paper was designed to examine the impact of leadership effectiveness and teacher performance as well as understand the role of work motivation. The most prominent finding to emerge from this study is that leadership effectiveness is categorized as high. The more effective the leadership of vocational school principals, the better the teacher's performance. The work motivation of vocational school teachers is categorized high. In this study, vocational teachers perceived satisfied with their intrinsic and extrinsic needs. Additionally, vocational school teacher performance is categorized as high. Teachers are considered principals to have good professional, personal, social, and pedagogical competencies. The findings of this study showed that effective leadership positively influence both work motivation and teacher performance. Indeed, work motivation can explain the relationship between effective leadership and teacher performance. Work motivation in this study takes role as a partial mediating connection between leadership effectiveness and

vocational school teacher performance. This study lies some limitations in the term of geographical research studies, and further research can elaborate in the wider study area. Additionally, future scholars can also involve other relevant variables that can enhance teachers' performance either in the vocational schools or in senior high schools. Based on the findings and discussion previously, it is recommended to school principals, city/regency/provincial head offices and ministries related to the vocational education of the Republic of Indonesia to pay attention and improve leadership effectiveness and work motivation of teachers so that teacher performance will improve for the better and eventually will increase student learning achievement.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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