

THE EFFECT OF CURRICULUM UNDERSTANDING, WORK MOTIVATION, AND PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP ON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership partially or simultaneously on the performance of junior high school teachers. This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlation research type). The research sample consisted of 31 teachers, and data collection techniques were carried out through tests and questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression through the SPSS version 26 application. The results of the study showed that curriculum understanding had a partial effect on the performance of teachers at SMPN 5 Satu Atap Batanggadis with a significance value of $0.209 > 0.05$. Work motivation had a partial effect on the performance of elementary school teachers in Gugus V Bakongan Timur with a significance value of $0.374 > 0.05$. Principal leadership also had a partial effect on the performance of teachers at SMPN 5 Satu Atap Batanggadis with a significance value of $0.374 > 0.05$. Simultaneously, curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership had an effect on the performance of teachers at SMPN 5 Satu Atap Batanggadis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education has a strategic role in forming quality human resources, where teacher performance is a key factor in the success of the learning process. Teachers not only function as teachers, but also as character builders and motivators of students, especially at the junior

high school level which is an important transition period. Teacher performance is greatly influenced by an understanding of the curriculum, work motivation, and the leadership of the principal. Teachers who understand the curriculum tend to be able to design effective learning, while high work motivation encourages creativity and dedication in teaching. In addition, the visionary and communicative leadership style of the principal has been shown to have a positive effect on teacher enthusiasm and productivity.

The phenomenon at SMP Negeri 5 Satu Atap Muara Batang Gadis shows that the performance of some teachers is still weak, such as lack of learning preparation, use of RPP that is not in accordance with the context, and minimal variation in teaching methods. However, there are routine evaluations that show active interaction between the principal and teachers, opening up opportunities for improvement. Based on this, this study aims to analyze the influence of curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership on the performance of junior high school teachers.

2. METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational design that aims to determine the extent of the relationship between curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership on teacher performance. The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 5 Satu Atap Muara Batang Gadis, with a sample of 31 teachers. Data were collected through a closed questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability.

The research instrument included four variables: curriculum understanding, work motivation, principal leadership, and teacher performance, each of which was measured using a Likert scale. Data analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression using SPSS version 26 software. This technique is used to identify the influence, both partially and simultaneously, of the three independent variables on the dependent variable, namely teacher performance.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of multiple regression analysis, it was found that curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership together had a significant effect on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 5 Satu Atap Muara Batang Gadis. This is evidenced by the F-count value of 61.065 with a significance level of 0.000, which indicates that the three variables collectively have a real contribution to improving teacher performance. Individually, work motivation emerged as the most dominant factor, with a regression coefficient of 0.535 and a significance of 0.020. This indicates that teachers who have high motivation are more likely to show optimal performance. Understanding the curriculum also has a positive effect although its contribution is smaller, namely 14.6%. This means that a good understanding of the content and direction of the curriculum encourages teachers to design more effective learning.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2069.053	3	689.684	61.065	.000 ^b
	Residual	304.947	27	11.294		
	Total	2374.000	30			
a. Dependent Variable: Teacher performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Principal Leadership, Curriculum Understanding, Work Motivation						

Meanwhile, the principal's leadership also influences teacher performance, especially in terms of creating a supportive work environment. A communicative and participatory leadership style is considered capable of increasing teacher enthusiasm and discipline. Overall, these three factors complement each other in shaping professional teacher performance and have an impact on the quality of learning. Meanwhile, the principal's leadership also influences teacher performance, especially in terms of creating a supportive work environment. A communicative and participatory leadership style is considered capable of increasing teacher enthusiasm and discipline. Overall, these three factors complement each other in shaping professional teacher performance and have an impact on the quality of learning.

3.1. FINDINGS

Coefficients^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-12.339	5.832		-2.116	.044
X1	.146	.114	.195	1.288	.209
X2	.535	.215	.568	2.482	.020
X3	.193	.213	.195	.903	.374

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Partial Influence of Curriculum Understanding on Teacher Performance, the results show that curriculum understanding has a partial effect on teacher performance, although with a significance value of $0.209 > 0.05$, meaning it is not statistically significant, but still has a practical contribution in the field. Partial Influence of Work Motivation on Teacher Performance.

Work motivation also shows a partial effect on teacher performance, with a significance value of $0.374 > 0.05$, not statistically significant, but still relevant for evaluating internal teacher factors. Partial Influence of Principal Leadership on Teacher Performance. Principal leadership shows a partial effect on teacher performance with a significance value of $0.374 > 0.05$, meaning it is also not statistically significant individually. Simultaneous Influence of the Three Variables on Teacher Performance. Simultaneously, curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership affect teacher performance at SMPN 5 Satu Atap Batanggadis. This means that the combination of the three has a positive impact on improving performance. Teacher Performance Problems. problems found in the field such as low ability to prepare lesson plans, minimal variation in teaching methods, lack of teaching readiness, to lack of effective classroom management, including cases of teachers falling asleep during learning. Routine Evaluation by the School. The existence of daily evaluations between teachers and the principal is one of the positive findings that shows active communication and supervision, although it has not had an optimal impact on significantly improving performance.

3.2 DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that simultaneously, curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership contribute significantly to improving teacher performance. This finding strengthens the view that teacher work quality is determined by a combination of various factors that support each other, not just one element

separately. Although the three variables do not have a significant effect when tested partially, their collective contribution still shows a strong relationship to performance. This is in line with previous findings that emphasize the importance of leadership support and motivation in creating a productive work climate.

Teacher work motivation, although not statistically significant, remains an important aspect in encouraging enthusiasm, creativity, and responsibility in teaching. Likewise, curriculum understanding should guide teachers in planning learning, but its impact can be limited if not followed by effective implementation and supervision. In addition, the principal's supportive, open, and communicative leadership style can strengthen a positive work climate and increase teacher dedication. Overall, these three factors need to be seen as a complementary unit in efforts to improve the quality of education through improving teacher performance.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study and discussion, it can be concluded that partially, curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership do not have a significant effect on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 5 Satu Atap Muara Batang Gadis, because each shows a significance value above 0.05. However, simultaneously, the three variables are proven to have a significant effect on teacher performance, with a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05). This shows that the relationship between curriculum understanding, work motivation, and principal leadership together contribute to shaping the quality of teacher performance. The adaptive teacher performance model developed in this study empirically shows that improved performance can be achieved by strengthening work motivation and principal leadership. These two factors have an important role in encouraging teacher professionalism, so as to create a more effective and quality learning process.

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