

The Impact of the Principal's Servant Leadership on Teacher Performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti in 2023

Joy Grace Tambunan^{1*}, Lasmaria Lumban Tobing², Endang Juliati Manullang³

Tarutung State Institute for Christian Studies - Indonesia.

*Corresponding Author Joy Grace Tambunan

Tarutung State Institute for
Christian Studies -
Indonesia.

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Abstract: *The objective of this study is to determine the influence of the principal's servant leadership on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti. The research employs a quantitative inferential statistical method. The population consists of 32 teachers at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti, with a sample size of 30 teachers selected from SMP Negeri 3 Lintongnihuta for the pilot test. Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire comprising 60 items. The data analysis results indicate a significant impact of the principal's servant leadership on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti. The analysis of the relationship between variables X and Y yielded an r_{xy} value of 0.527, which is greater than the critical value of $r_{table}(\alpha=0.05, n=32) = 0.349$, and a t -value of 3.394, exceeding the critical t -value of 1.684, indicating a positive and significant relationship between the variables. The simple linear regression equation obtained is $\hat{y} = 33.949 + 0.735X$. Hypothesis testing showed that $F_{hitung} = 11.518$, which is greater than $F_{table} = 4.08$, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_a). The study concludes that there is a positive and significant effect of the principal's servant leadership on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti, with the coefficient of determination (r^2) = 27.7%.*

Keywords: *Principal Servant Leadership, Teacher Performance.*

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Introduction

In an organization, leadership is a key factor in enhancing organizational performance. The success of the educational process is influenced by various factors within the school, particularly the factor of educational leadership, namely the principal. The principal's leadership determines the school's success in achieving its educational unit goals and fulfilling the national education objectives.

The principal's leadership plays a crucial role in guiding and ensuring that the educational institution functions as intended, as outlined in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Article 5, Paragraph (5), which states that education is organized as a process of cultural development and every citizen has the right to lifelong education opportunities.

Servant leadership, as a concept and theory, represents a leadership style that prioritizes the needs of others. This leadership concept emerges from a person's desire to serve others, which can ignite the drive to lead. According to Usman, servant leadership encourages individuals to always be friendly with everyone, uphold ethics and morals, and consistently strive for excellence to provide superior service. This leadership model contrasts with

traditional leadership, as traditional leadership typically expects to be served by subordinates, whereas servant leadership focuses on fulfilling the needs of subordinates. As a Civil Servant (ASN), the principal is committed to serving the state, meaning that the principal must dedicate themselves to the nation through the best possible service to the school's stakeholders.

A challenge for a servant leader is to shift the focus from a profit-oriented perspective to one that emphasizes development and success in enhancing the quality of human resources. Teachers or staff will recognize that they are treated well by their superiors, which will lead to sustained contributions to the organization and improved performance. Furthermore, a servant leader typically engages directly with employees to encourage their continuous development. This support can take the form of service, assistance, or motivation.

To achieve teacher performance that meets expectations and educational goals, a professional principal is required. The principal occupies a strategic position within the school system, guiding and supporting teachers in their instructional activities. In the new management paradigm, a principal must be capable of functioning as an educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator (Pakpahan et al., 2021).

Teacher performance is perceived as the teacher's assessment of their work achievements related to work quality, responsibility, honesty, cooperation, and initiative. The compensation provided to teachers significantly affects job satisfaction, work motivation, and performance outcomes. The servant leadership of the principal and teacher performance are critical to the success of education in achieving educational objectives, which reflect the quality of education.

Research Methods

In this study, the researcher employs a quantitative research method. Every study must present the data obtained through observation, interviews, questionnaires, or documentation. Sugiyono explains that inferential statistics are used to analyze sample data and apply the results to the population.

Discussion

In English, performance is referred to as *job performance*, *actual performance*, or *level of performance*, which denotes the degree of success an employee has in completing their tasks. Performance is not an individual characteristic like talent or ability but rather the manifestation of those talents or abilities. More specifically, Armstrong and Baron assert that performance is the outcome of work that has a strong connection to organizational strategic goals, customer satisfaction, and economic contribution.

Teachers are crucial in achieving educational goals as part of the human resource performance in delivering formal education to prepare the nation's future generations to compete and possess competencies. Teachers must not only be professional but also possess the ability to plan lessons, articulate teaching objectives, present instructional materials, pose questions to students, teach concepts, communicate with students, observe the classroom, and evaluate learning outcomes.

Several factors influence teacher performance, including: personality and dedication, professional development, teaching ability, relationships and communication, community engagement, discipline, welfare, and work environment. Teacher performance reflects a teacher's ability to carry out their fundamental roles and functions within the school. According to Hasan, indicators of teacher performance include preparing lesson plans, conducting teaching and learning processes, fostering interpersonal relationships, evaluating learning, providing enrichment, and conducting remedial activities.

Servant leadership was first introduced by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970. Servant leadership prioritizes the needs of followers and treats subordinates as colleagues. This leadership concept is considered the most charismatic from a moral perspective. It views leadership not as a position or status, but as an opportunity to serve and fully develop others. Servant leadership arises genuinely from the heart to serve, driven by an inner voice that creates a desire to lead. It embodies a leadership approach that emphasizes serving, caring, and prioritizing the interests of subordinates over personal interests, with the aim of creating a better organization.

Spears, in the book by Harry Nenobais, believes that servant leadership has made a substantial impact in various specific areas of organizational development, including:

1. Servant leadership has become an institutional philosophy and a model for leadership and organization.
2. Servant leadership has established an ethical foundation and theoretical framework for various levels of training and education.
3. Servant leadership has positively shifted the focus of organizational communication.
4. Servant leadership has influenced the development of experiential education.
5. Servant leadership has been widely adopted as a fundamental concept for leadership and managerial training.
6. Servant leadership has been extensively utilized by various organizations to stimulate the development of top-level executive personalities.
7. Servant leadership has been well-received among diverse multicultural groups, including minorities and women.

According to Selfie, Benny, and Semuel, the characteristics of Christian leadership are based on Matthew 20:25-28: "But Jesus called them to Himself and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.'" The key characteristic that distinguishes this form of leadership from others is the desire to lead. Servant leadership aligns with the Biblical principle that Jesus Christ exemplified the model of servant leadership.

According to Imam Sofi, Mukhoyyaroh, and Yunus, the characteristics of servant leadership for principals are:

1. **Balanced Responsibility:** This involves balancing responsibility between the tasks to be performed and the people who are responsible for carrying out these tasks. In other words, a leader must pay attention not only to the structure of tasks but also to the welfare of their subordinates.
2. **Positive Role Modeling:** A role model refers to the expected responsibilities, behaviors, or achievements of someone in a specific position. Therefore, a good leader should serve as a role model or example for their subordinates.
3. **Effective Communication Skills:** A good leader must be able to convey ideas concisely and clearly, and in an appropriate manner.
4. **Positive Influence:** A good leader has a positive influence on their subordinates and uses this influence for beneficial purposes. Influence is the art of using power to move or change others' perspectives toward a specific goal or viewpoint.
5. **Ability to Persuade Others:** A successful leader is one who can use their communication skills and influence to persuade others of their viewpoint and guide them toward full responsibility for that perspective.

From the statement analysis test, which examines whether there is a positive relationship between variable X and variable Y, a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.527 was obtained. This value was compared to the critical value (r_{table}) for a 5% error level, which is 0.349. Since the obtained r value is greater than the critical value ($r > r_{\text{table}}$), it indicates a positive relationship between variable X

and variable Y, specifically the positive relationship between the principal's servant leadership and teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti.

From the requirement analysis test, which assesses whether there is a significant relationship between variable X and variable Y, a t-value of 3.394 was obtained. This value was then compared to the critical t-value (t_{table}) for a 5% error level. For $n=32$, the critical t-value is 1.684, and the obtained t-value ($t > t_{table}$) is 3.394. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between variable X and variable Y, specifically the significant impact of the principal's servant leadership on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti.

From the regression analysis, the regression equation obtained is $\hat{y} = 33.949 + 0.735X$. This equation indicates that with a constant value of 33.949, each unit increase in the principal's servant leadership results in a 0.735 increase in teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti. From the coefficient of determination test, the value of (r^2) is 0.277. This value indicates that the percentage of the principal's servant leadership effect on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti is 27.7%.

From the F-test, the computed F-value (F_{hitung}) is 11.518, which is greater than the critical F-value (F_{table}). Since the null hypothesis ($H_0: \beta = 0$) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ($H_a: \beta \neq 0$) is accepted when $F_{hitung} > F_{table}$, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant effect of the principal's servant leadership on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti.

Conclusion

The principal's *Servant leadership* is characterized by a genuine, heartfelt desire to serve. This choice emerges from an inner calling to serve, which fosters a passion for leadership. Servant leadership is a leadership approach where the leader serves, cares for, and prioritizes the interests of their subordinates over their own, aiming to create a better organization.

Teacher performance reflects the process of learning or communication between teachers and students within the classroom. The quality of teachers plays a crucial role in the classroom and requires oversight and support from the principal. The principal's service-oriented leadership motivates teachers in fulfilling their tasks and responsibilities.

The research results indicate that the hypothesis test yielded an F-value (F_{hitung}) of 11.518, which is greater than the critical F-value (F_{table}) of 4.08. Therefore, the research hypothesis is accepted. It can be concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between the principal's servant leadership and teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti, with an effect size of 27.7%.

Recommendation

Based on the research findings, the author provides the following recommendations aimed at improving teacher performance at SMP Negeri 4 Laguboti:

1. For the Principal: It is recommended that the principal, in order to enhance teacher performance, remain humble and understanding of subordinates who may have performance shortcomings. The principal's leadership should not merely be symbolic but should effectively support and serve teachers,

staff, and the entire school community. The principal should focus on improving servant leadership by being open and communicative with teachers, so that any weaknesses or deficiencies in school performance are adequately addressed. A principal with a positive leadership style will contribute to improved teacher performance, as the principal plays a critical role in the overall success of the school.

2. For Teachers: Teachers should understand the importance of a positive school climate, where relationships between teachers and students should be good and harmonious. Teachers should be more open and inclusive with all students to foster strong relationships and effective collaboration. In addition to fostering relationships with students, teachers should also be open with the principal by communicating any deficiencies or weaknesses in the school's educational practices. Beyond the school climate, teachers should enhance their motivation to teach by increasing their responsibility in carrying out their duties and setting clear targets. High motivation among teachers leads to better performance and outcomes.

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