

Teachers' Perception of Principal's Leadership Style at State Senior High School 2 Muara Sugihan

Ahmadi¹, Ena Marie Tiro²

¹SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan, South Sumatra, Indonesia, ²Shinawatra University, Thailand

Corresponding author e-mail: mahmudabbasahmadhanrafkhan@gmail.com

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Abstract: The aim of this research is to analyze teachers' perceptions of the principal's actions at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan. The method used was quantitative descriptive research involving 30 teachers as respondents. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire that assessed perceptions of several leadership styles, such as participative, transformative, and autocratic, as well as teacher motivation and work styles. Research findings show that the majority of teachers have a positive perception of transformational and participative leadership (70% and 65%, respectively), while autocratic leadership has a negative perception (55%). In addition, there is a significant positive correlation between positive perceptions of leadership and greater work motivation ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$). This shows the need for more inclusive and inspiring leadership development to increase teachers' motivation and productivity in schools. It is hoped that this research can help school principals improve leadership effectiveness at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan.

Keywords: Leadership Style, Motivation, Principal, Teachers' Perception

A. Introduction

One of the main pillars in building a nation is education, and school administrators play an important role in creating an effective learning environment (Jannah & Rasyid, 2023). The principal's leadership style can influence teacher motivation, work ethic, and perceptions of educational policies and practices implemented in schools (Akmaluddin et al., 2020). At SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan, the principal not only acts as the head of education but also as a leader who must be able to motivate and guide teachers to achieve the educational goals that have been set (Akmaluddin et al., 2020). Teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style are very important to understand because they can have a long-term impact on work performance, collaboration between colleagues, and innovation in the teaching process (Megiati & Pratiwi, 2021). Research on leadership styles often concludes that transformational, participatory, and democratic leadership styles consistently

produce higher levels of work performance among teachers (Wilda et al., 2022). However, each school has a unique context, such as SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan, which may have unique social dynamics and challenges.

The purpose of this study was to determine and analyze teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan. Through a deeper understanding of this concept, it is hoped that factors that increase or inhibit the effectiveness of the principal's leadership can be identified, as well as recommendations for improvements to be made to school education management (Yulia et al., 2021). This study is also expected to be a guideline for school administrators and other stakeholders in improving the level of education at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan. Why did we choose research on teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan? Because, according to several findings, the principal's leadership style is very important in creating an effective learning environment. Understanding how this teacher manages leadership can provide insight into its effectiveness (Wilda et al., 2022). The principal's leadership style is very important in creating an effective learning environment. Understanding how this teacher manages leadership can provide insight into its effectiveness (Randy et al., 2019).

Leadership style can affect a teacher's motivation, work ethic, and satisfaction. This study can establish a relationship between teaching performance and leadership by investigating teacher's perceptions (Novalita et al., 2023). The principal's leadership style has a long-term impact on the school environment and the quality of education. We can understand how leadership affects teacher performance and motivation in teaching by understanding teacher's perceptions (Anggianita et al., 2020). Leadership style can affect a teacher's motivation, work ethic, and satisfaction. This study can establish a relationship between teaching performance and leadership by investigating teacher's perceptions (Badrus Sholeh et al., 2023).

A person who carries out daily activities with the principal is called a teacher. They can provide a clear picture of the effectiveness of the policies implemented and their impact on the learning process (Jannah & Rasyid, 2023). Leadership style can affect a teacher's motivation, work ethic, and satisfaction. This study can establish a relationship between teaching performance and leadership by investigating teacher's perceptions (Turnip et al., 2019). The results of this study can help principals develop more effective leadership practices, which, when implemented, can improve teaching standards in schools (Yulia et al., 2021). The results of this study can be used as a guideline for improving school administration (Marmoah et al., 2022). By understanding the teacher's perspective, the principal can adjust his leadership behavior to create a better work environment (Yulia et al., 2021).

Understanding teachers' perspectives on leadership can help build a more harmonious working relationship between teachers and principals, which will ultimately contribute to improving the quality of education (Saputra & Hadi, 2022). Given the ever-changing nature of education, this study is important to understand how school administrators can adapt to these changes and their impact on teachers (Supardi & Aulia Anshari, 2022). This study has an exclusive local focus at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan and can provide examples of unique conditions and challenges faced in the educational context. In addition, this study also aims to understand the dynamics that exist in the school and how local characteristics influence teacher's perceptions (Wilda et al., 2022).

In this study, we try to find out how teachers perceive the leadership style applied by the principal at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan by knowing the leadership style applied by the principal so that teachers can understand what the principal's goals are in implementing a good education system according to national education goals. Several findings provide examples of various leadership behaviors applied by school administrators and how a teacher's perception can vary depending on the situation and individual experience (Novalita et al., 2023). The study showed that there is a relationship between teacher's perceptions of the principal's leadership style (Akbar & Imaniyati, 2019). Further research was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan in the hope of enriching understanding of the dynamics of leadership in the school. The problems in this article are 1) What are the leadership styles applied by the principal at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan according to teacher's perceptions?; 2) How does the principal's leadership style influence teacher motivation and performance at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan?; and 3) To what extent does the principal's leadership style contribute to the learning environment at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan?

B. Methods

This study attempts to determine teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style. We expect this research method to provide a comprehensive picture of teachers' perspectives on the principal's actions (Turnip et al., 2019). The results of this study are expected to be a basis for developing school leadership (Wahyuni et al., 2022). This research was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan, precisely in the Muara Sugihan sub-district, Banyuasin Regency. This study uses a quantitative descriptive design. The purpose of this design is to describe and analyze teachers' perspectives on the principal's actions at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan. The population is all teachers who teach at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan, and the sample is Using purposive sampling techniques, 30 teachers were taken from various subjects and teaching experience backgrounds. Sample selection is based on certain criteria, such as length of teaching and involvement in school activities.

The data collection technique used in this study was by distributing questionnaires directly to school respondents (Rosalina, 2023). The purpose of the study and the questionnaire method will be explained to ensure that respondents have a good understanding (Novalita et al., 2023). The study was conducted by adjusting ethical aspects, such as obtaining permission from school officials to conduct research, maintaining the identity and data of respondents, providing clear information about the purpose of the study, and the rights of respondents to feel comfortable with themselves (Wulandari et al., 2024).

C. Results and Discussion

This research was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan. This study aims to describe teachers' perceptions of the leadership style of the principal of SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan. The variable studied in this study was the leadership style of the principal. Data were taken from 30 teachers. The majority were teachers with teaching experience between 3-6 years (40%), followed by teachers with more than 6 years of experience (35%) and new teachers (25%). Most respondents were general subject teachers (60%), while the rest taught special subjects (40%). Teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan: 1) Transformational Leadership Style, 70% of respondents gave a positive assessment, with an average score of 4.2 (scale 1-5), indicating that they feel inspired and motivated by the principal's leadership; 2) Participative Leadership Style, 65% of respondents agreed that the principal involved teachers in decision-making, with an average score of 3.9; and 3) Autocratic Leadership Style, 55% of respondents gave a negative assessment of the autocratic style, with an average score of 2.5, indicating dissatisfaction with the overly controlling approach.

Based on the results or findings, it shows that when the principal uses a transformational leadership style, 75% of teachers feel more motivated in carrying out their duties as educators. Meanwhile, the Pearson correlation test shows that there is a significant positive relationship ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$) between positive perceptions of the principal's leadership style and teacher work motivation. The results show that the majority of teachers have a positive perception of the transformational leadership style applied by the principal. This is in line with previous research showing that this leadership style can increase teacher motivation and engagement (Akmaluddin et al., 2020). Teachers feel that the principal is able to inspire them and provide the necessary support for professional development (Megiati & Pratiwi, 2021). The high level of agreement with the participative leadership style indicates that teachers value involvement in decision-making. This suggests that teachers want to have a say in policies that affect them, which can also increase their sense of belonging and commitment to the school. Megiati & Pratiwi (2021) supports this finding, stating that team member involvement in decisions can increase motivation.

Negative assessments of the autocratic leadership style indicate that this approach is ineffective in the context of SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan. Teacher dissatisfaction with this style can result in low motivation and performance. This reflects that in an educational environment, where collaboration and innovation are essential, an overly controlling leadership style can be a barrier (Wilda et al., 2022). The positive relationship found between positive perceptions of the principal's leadership style and teacher work motivation indicates that good leadership can contribute to improved teaching performance (Sari et al., 2020). Teachers who feel supported and motivated are more likely to innovate in their teaching methods, which ultimately has a positive impact on student learning outcomes (Saputra & Hadi, 2022).

D. Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that the leadership style of the principal at SMA Negeri 2 Muara Sugihan, especially those that are transformational and participatory, have a positive impact on teacher perception, motivation, and performance. This study recommends the importance of developing a more inclusive and inspiring leadership style to create a better learning environment.

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