# PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON TEACHER PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF BANDA ACEH

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**ABSTRACT**

This study objectives to examine the influence of principal leadership on teacher performance at SD Negeri 10 Banda Aceh. The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach, involving the principal and 16 teachers as study subjects. Data was collected through interviews and questionnaires to get insight into the individuals' perceptions and experiences. To identify trends in responses, the obtained data was analysed using a percentage-based method. The findings revealed that teacher responses regarding the principal's leadership were consistently high, with responses categorized as "continuously," "frequently," and "occasionally" each receiving 100%. Overall, the analysis showed that 93.75% of the teachers indicated a strong correlation between principal leadership and teacher performance.

## 1. Introduction

Education plays an active role in the progress of a developing country such Indonesia. As the nation continues to advance, the need for a strong and embryonic education system becomes progressively crucial(Novrita et al., 2025). Meeting this need requires a designed and constant effort to make parallel education with national progress. A well-managed, methodical, and efficient education system can have a substantial impact on national development. This system not only fosters knowledge distribution, but it also contributes to the development of a skilled and informed community. These findings are critical for boosting the nation's overall performance(Susanti et al., 2025).

Teachers are one of the resource elements that determine the success of education in schools, because teachers are the human element that is very close to students in daily education in schools(Rahmawati & Yuliyanto, 2024). Teachers are the primary determinant of educational quality

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since they are human resources capable of leveraging other elements to establish a high-quality teaching and learning process(Shahat et al., 2025).

Teachers play a pivotal role in increasing the quality of education in schools. As a result, educators must be able to increase their performance in carrying out their obligations, as education in the future will require superior education professional abilities(Tripuspita et al., 2023). As a result, professional teacher performance can serve as a potential resource for educational future success. Teachers must be provided with a diverse arrangement of professional development opportunities and training in order to enhance their teaching performance in educational institutions(Imrani & Jafarov, 2023)

In relation to teacher performance, leadership also plays a critical role in shaping educational outcomes. The effectiveness of leadership within educational institutions can directly influence the motivation, professionalism, and development of teachers(Yalçınkaya et al., 2021). Leadership is defined as the ability of an individual to influence, guide, encourage, and direct others to work collectively toward achieving organizational goals. Consequently, strong and effective leadership in schools can create a supportive environment that fosters teacher growth, enhances collaboration, and ensures the successful implementation of educational objectives(Huda et al., 2024). Thus, the interaction between professional teacher development and effective leadership becomes a key factor in driving the quality and success of education(Bektaş et al., 2022).

The leadership role within a school is primarily carried out by the principal. As the highest leader in the school environment, the principal is responsible for guiding, influencing, and motivating teachers and staff to work toward shared educational goals(Belay et al., 2021). This responsibility places the principal at the centre of efforts to improve school performance and create a positive learning environment(Tatik et al., 2025).

Leadership style refers to the method a leader uses to influence and direct their subordinates(Nduneseokwu & Harder, 2023). Each leader may adopt a different style based on personality, situation, or organizational needs, and this style greatly affects how decisions are made and how the team functions(Aldhaheri, 2017). Therefore, understanding and applying an appropriate leadership style is essential for achieving effective school management(Stavrou & Kafa, 2023).

Effective and ineffective leadership can significantly impact the overall success of an organization, especially in the context of education(Mincu, 2022). A principal must be able to distinguish between actions that foster collaboration and growth and those that hinder progress(Çoban et al., 2023). Recognizing the importance of effective leadership allows the principal to create strategies that promote a productive, motivated, and goal-oriented school community(Mujahidah et al., 2023).

Teacher performance refers to a teacher's ability to conduct the learning process effectively in alignment with predetermined educational goals(Eva et al., 2023). This performance encompasses several critical aspects, including planning teaching and learning programs, executing the instructional process, and managing classroom conditions to support learning. Additionally, it involves the teacher's ability to maintain a conducive classroom environment, regulate learning dynamics, and assess student learning outcomes accurately.(Andrian et al., 2023)

The various components of teacher performance collectively contribute to the overall effectiveness of the educational process. Each aspect, from lesson planning to evaluation, plays a significant role in ensuring that students achieve the intended learning objectives. When these components are executed effectively, they reflect a teacher's professionalism and competence.

Performance is undeniably a crucial factor in determining the quality of a teacher's work. High-performing teachers are more likely to inspire student achievement, contribute to school improvement, and support educational excellence. Therefore, evaluating and enhancing teacher performance is essential for advancing the quality of education as a whole.

The principal, as the leader of a school organization, must be able to identify the areas where teachers need support and improvement. By recognizing these shortcomings, the principal can take steps to enhance teacher performance, such as offering motivation and guidance to help teachers carry out their responsibilities effectively. Encouraging teachers to follow established rules and directions can positively impact both individual performance and overall school achievement.

Teacher performance is closely related to the quality of school leadership and the personal commitment of the teachers themselves(Arbi, 2023). In elementary schools, the results of teacher performance evaluations hold great importance as they directly influence educational quality. These evaluations help ensure that teaching standards are met and that students receive effective instruction(Syauqi, 2023).

For teachers, performance assessments serve as valuable feedback that highlights their abilities, strengths, weaknesses, and potential. This feedback can be used to set personal goals, plan career development, and improve professional practices. As a result, performance evaluation plays a vital role in shaping the career growth of teachers. Studying teacher performance is essential because it reflects the overall success of a school organization. The implementation and quality of teaching directly affect the school's progress and reputation. Therefore, improving teacher performance can lead to measurable advancements in school effectiveness and student outcomes.

## 2. Methodology

In this study, the researchers employed a qualitative research approach to explore the subject in depth. This approach was chosen because it presents data in the form of words and language, allowing for a rich and detailed understanding of the phenomena being studied. Qualitative research is ideal for studying human behavior, experiences, and views in the context of their environment. This study employed descriptive research methods. Descriptive research is considered the most foundational type of research since it focuses on reporting current trends rather than modifying variables. This approach enables researchers to observe and describe occurrences or conditions as they emerge naturally, resulting in an accurate depiction of the actual situation.

The research study involved the principal and 16 teachers from SD Negeri 10 Banda Aceh. These participants were chosen due to their direct involvement in the educational environment under investigation. Their experiences and insights provide useful information for the research targets. Data collecting in qualitative research is employ in a natural environment. The primary data sources for this study were interviews and questionnaires administered directly to individuals. These methods enabled researchers to collect true, in-depth data that reflected real-life experiences and perceptions, To identify trends in responses, the obtained data was analysed using a percentage-based method.

## 3. Results
### 3.1 Questionnaire Data Analysis Result

According to the principal of SD Negeri 10 Banda Aceh, how to address issues in decision making is always decided in meetings with teachers and through hearings, because in order to solve a problem, the principle must first seek feedback from the teachers. If the problem remains unsolved after hearings, the principal must make his own judgment, which will then be implemented. The principle underlined that decisions are often taken through careful consideration, ensuring that various views are considered in order to arrive at the most effective answer. However, if consensus

cannot be established through group debate, the principal assumes the duty for making the final decision independently.

Once such a decision has been reached, it is implemented in the classroom circumstance. The combination of collaborative thinking and decisive leadership demonstrates the principal's adaptive leadership in addressing issues and keeping the education institution running efficiently.

### 3.2 Result of Interview analysis

Understanding leadership allows a principal to better understand himself as a school leader, as well as his strengths and shortcomings, and how to approach teachers. Teachers have distinctive characteristics that require special attention and support from their leaders in order for them to effectively use their time and improve their effectiveness as educators.

In carrying out its leadership responsibilities, the principle always implements policies that contribute to the attainment of a school organization's goals. A principal can do this in a variety of ways as a leader. The principle, as a school leader, uses this strategy to influence his subordinates. Based on study conducted at SD Negeri 10 Banda Aceh, the findings indicate that the principal's leadership has a substantial influence on teacher performance at SD Negeri 10 Banda Aceh. The impact of the principal's leadership on teacher performance.

The study's findings indicate that the principal's leadership improves teacher effectiveness. Principals have a vital role in school management. Leadership is an important component of school management operations because it ensures that teachers perform optimally. Principals need to improve their abilities to provide effective leadership to teachers. The principal's ability to lead can be enhanced by creating a stronger leadership style. This shows that teacher performance will continue to rise as school principals improve their leadership.

Leadership is tailored to the conditions and characteristics of teachers. There needs to be different treatment or actions from the principal as a school leader to teachers as subordinates because teachers have different characteristics and abilities by providing different treatment, it will improve teacher performance. Based on the research described above, it appears that principal leadership is very important to improve teacher performance. Principal leadership has a significant influence on teacher performance because the leadership carried out by the principal is adjusted to the conditions and characteristics of the teachers. Where teachers who have different characteristics will get different treatment. Principals need to improve their ability to apply the right leadership that can be used in leading teachers. With an increase in leadership style, the principal can improve his ability to lead. This means that teacher performance will continue to improve in line with the improvement of leadership used by school principals.

## 4. Conclusions

Based on the findings and discussions, it can be concluded that the leadership of the principal at SD Negeri 10 Banda Aceh significantly contributes to enhancing teacher performance. The principal demonstrates commendable problem-solving and decision-making capabilities, characterized by a high level of responsibility and a consistent emphasis on collective deliberation. Furthermore, the principal plays a proactive role in guiding and mobilizing both teachers and students. This is achieved through direct mentorship, motivation, and the provision of clear and consistent direction, which fosters a supportive and goal-oriented educational environment.

Quantitatively, the study reveals that 93.75% of respondents—equivalent to 16 teachers— perceive the principal's leadership as consistently effective, falling into the "always" category. This strong majority underscores the pivotal influence of leadership on teacher performance. In summary, the principal's leadership at SD Negeri 10 Banda Aceh is not only evident but also instrumental in shaping teacher professionalism and educational outcomes. These findings highlight

the importance of strategic, participative, and motivational leadership in the context of primary education.

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