

Research Article

# Internal and External Environment Analysis in Improving the Performance of Teachers of Muhammadiyah Junior High School 35 Sigambal, South Rantau District, Labuhanbatu Regency

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of work motivation, teacher competence, school culture, and principal's leadership on teacher performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal. Teacher performance is a key factor in determining the quality of learning and educational success. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method of 13 active teachers as respondents. Data were collected through a Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed using multiple linear regression with the help of SPSS. The results of the partial test showed that the variables of work motivation and teacher competence did not have a significant effect on teacher performance, while school culture and principal leadership had a positive and significant effect. However, simultaneously, these four variables had a significant effect on teacher performance with a  $F_{cal}$  value of 69.912 and a significance of 0.000 ( $<0.05$ ). The determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) of 0.918 indicates that 91.8% of the variation in teacher performance can be explained by all four independent variables in the model. These findings confirm the importance of synergy between internal (motivation and competence) and external factors (school culture and leadership) in forming a work environment conducive to improving teacher performance. This study recommends strengthening school culture and leadership quality as priority strategies in improving the quality of education.

**Keywords:** Teacher Performance; Work Motivation; Teacher Competence; School Culture; Leadership

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher performance is one of the most critical determinants of the quality of learning and educational success in schools. Numerous studies affirm that teacher effectiveness directly correlates with student achievement and school development (Putri & Imaniyati, 2017; Makmur, 2023). Teachers not only act as instructors but also as leaders, facilitators, motivators, and role models in the learning process. According to Law No. 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers in Indonesia, teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, guiding, training, and evaluating students. Therefore, improving teacher performance is a strategic entry point for enhancing the overall quality of education. However, teacher performance is shaped by a complex interaction of internal and external factors. Internal factors include motivation, competence, educational background, personal character, and work ethics (Anita, 2024). External factors, on the other hand, encompass leadership style, school culture, facilities, policies, and community support (Z. Nuriansari, 2021). Understanding these dimensions is essential because improvements in one domain often depend on supportive conditions in the other.

Previous research by Alfaniah et al. (2024) found that teaching ability, work motivation, and school leadership support are positively correlated with teacher effectiveness. Furthermore, Nuriansari (2021) argues that teachers who receive adequate compensation and work in a supportive environment tend to be more focused, productive, and committed to their teaching responsibilities. Yet, despite these insights, performance gaps among teachers persist, especially in schools with uneven access to professional development, limited leadership capacity, or weak organizational culture. At SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal, located in South Rantau District, Labuhanbatu Regency, these challenges are evident. Although the school is categorized as developing and has shown positive trends in several areas, initial observations and informal interviews revealed that several teachers still demonstrate suboptimal performance. One major internal factor is the limited professional competence of some teachers reflected in their pedagogical and content knowledge. Externally, the

leadership of school principals and the surrounding school culture also play crucial roles. For instance, in environments where collaboration, innovation, and mutual respect are not strongly emphasized, teachers may struggle to grow professionally or stay motivated.

This research is conducted to respond to that reality by focusing on two key internal factors teacher motivation and competence and two external factors school culture and principal leadership. These four dimensions are considered both influential and modifiable through policy, training, and school-based interventions. The study is confined to SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal to ensure contextual depth and to provide practical implications for school management.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method, which emphasizes objective measurement using numbers and statistical analysis. The purpose is to find out the influence of internal and external factors on the performance of teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal. This approach is deductive, starting from theory, hypothesis formulation, field data collection, to statistical testing (Hardani, et al, 2020). The population in this study is all teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal as many as 13 people. Sampling uses purposive sampling techniques, which are selection based on certain criteria such as teaching experience and involvement in performance improvement programs (Hikmawati, Fenti, 2020). The data used is primary data, obtained directly from respondents through questionnaires. The research instrument included a questionnaire that measured five variables: work motivation, teacher competence, school culture, principal's leadership, and teacher performance (Sugiyono, 2019). Data was collected using a Likert scale questionnaire. Before use, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability using SPSS. Validity was tested with Pearson Product Moment correlation, and reliability was tested with the Cronbach Alpha formula (Arikunto, Suharsimi, 2016). The data analysis consisted of descriptive analysis and multiple linear regression analysis. Classical assumption tests were performed to ensure the feasibility of the model, including tests of normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov), multicollinearity (VIF and Tolerance), heteroscedasticity (Spearman test), and autocorrelation (Durbin-Watson). Hypothesis testing was carried out using a t-test (partial), an F test (simultaneous), and a determination coefficient (Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>) to determine the influence of each independent variable on the bound variable, namely teacher performance (Paramita, R. 2021).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 The Effect of Work Motivation on Teacher Performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal

The results of the t-test analysis showed that work motivation did not have a significant effect on the performance of teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal. The t-calculated value of 1.036 is smaller than the t-table of 2.055, with a significance value of 0.310 that exceeds the limit of 0.05. This indicates that although theoretically work motivation is an important factor, in practice the motivation of teachers has not been able to drive performance in real terms. According to Siswanto (2005), work motivation is the driving force that determines the enthusiasm and dedication of individuals in work. However, motivation doesn't work in a vacuum. Without the support of a good work environment, internal motivation is difficult to realize in the form of optimal performance. The theory put forward by Kamijan and Yuyun (2021) emphasizes that the work environment, both physical and non-physical, greatly affects employee productivity. In schools, a supportive, collaborative, and conducive environment is an important factor in realizing teachers' work motivation. The absence of incentives, minimal facilities, or a lack of healthy professional interaction between teachers, principals, and other school staff can be an obstacle to the actualization of work motivation. This is in line with the findings of Fauzi and Rachmawati (2020) and Fitriani (2019), who stated that work motivation tends to be ineffective if it is not supported by a supportive organizational structure and work environment. In addition, the aspect of teacher competence as part of the internal environment cannot be ignored. Makmur (2023) states that competence includes knowledge, understanding, skills, and professional values. If high motivation is not accompanied by adequate competence, then teacher performance is still not optimal. Thus, new work motivation will have a significant impact on teacher performance if accompanied by the support of a positive work environment and strong professionalism. This emphasizes the importance of an integrated approach between internal and external factors in an effort to improve teacher performance.

### 3.2 The Influence of Teacher Competence on Teacher Performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal

The results of the t-test analysis showed that the teacher's competence did not have a significant effect on the performance of teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal. The t-calculated value of -0.825 is smaller than the t-table of 2.055, with a significance value of 0.417 which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Statistically, these findings indicate that teacher competence, although theoretically the foundation of professionalism, has not been fully reflected in real performance improvements. Competence, as stipulated in Law Number 14 of 2005, includes knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes that must be possessed and realized in learning practice. However, the actualization of competencies in the form of performance cannot stand alone. As explained by Makmur (2023), teacher competence includes four main dimensions: knowledge, understanding, skills, and values. When any of these dimensions are not supported by a supportive system or environment, then competence becomes only a latent potential. In this regard, the work environment theory from Kamijan and Yuyun (2021) is important. The work environment both physical (facilities, classrooms, facilities) and non-physical (relationships between teachers, support of principals) plays a major role in determining the effectiveness of competency actualization. Without healthy professional interaction, periodic evaluations, and supportive leadership, teacher competencies are difficult to translate into optimal performance. Furthermore, the internal environment such as the professionalism of teachers is also influenced by organizational motivation and support. As found by Putri and Sari (2021), improving competencies without real implementation and a strong monitoring system will not have a direct impact on teachers' work outcomes. Thus, it is not enough to just develop competencies through training; Educational institutions must also build a supportive work environment system, implement consistent supervision, and provide space for teachers to reflect and develop their professionalism in daily practice. This holistic approach will allow competencies to contribute significantly to teacher performance and overall quality of education.

### 3.3 The Influence of School Culture on Teacher Performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal

The results of the t-test analysis showed that the school culture variable had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance, with a t-calculation value of 3.945 greater than the t-table of 2.055 and a significance of  $0.001 < 0.05$ . These findings confirm that a positive school culture plays an important role in creating a conducive, productive, and supportive work environment for teachers. School culture is part of a non-physical external environment that has a major influence on individual behavior in the organization. According to Kamijan and Yuyun (2021), the work environment includes not only physical conditions, but also social atmospheres such as harmonious interaction, collective support, and the value system and norms that apply in schools. This supportive non-physical environment is an important part of school culture, which directly impacts teacher performance. A strong school culture is reflected through values such as cooperation, honesty, discipline, and a high work ethic. These values are the motivating factors that form the intrinsic motivation of teachers. In the context of Sagir Siswanto's (2005) motivational theory, a conducive work environment is able to strengthen an individual's desire to work optimally, create enthusiasm, and increase dedication in teaching tasks. Internally, the professionalism of teachers is also supported by a good school culture. When professional values such as honesty, responsibility, and collaboration are upheld, teachers are more motivated to improve their competence and performance. This supports the idea that performance improvement does not depend only on individual factors, but is also influenced by social and institutional cultural systems. In line with Schein's (2010) theory that organizational culture shapes the behavior and performance of its members, consciously managed school culture can be a driving force that ensures the sustainability of the quality of education. Therefore, strengthening school culture is an effective strategy in creating an education system that is oriented towards performance, integrity, and sustainability of learning.

### 3.4 The Influence of Leadership on Teacher Performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal

The results of the t-test analysis showed that the leadership variable had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance, with a t-count of  $3.002 > t\text{-table}$  of 2.055 and a significance value of  $0.006 < 0.05$ . These findings confirm that the quality of principals' leadership plays an important role in creating a supportive work environment, which ultimately impacts improved teacher performance. In the context of work environment theory, Kamijan and Yuyun (2021) explain that the work environment includes physical and non-physical factors that affect individual performance. In this case, the

principal's leadership is included in the highly influential non-physical external environment. Communicative, supportive, and inspirational leadership will form healthy interactions between school residents, thereby increasing teachers' morale and professionalism. Effective leadership is also closely related to the formation of a positive work culture, which is a work environment that respects performance, provides support, and provides constructive feedback. This can increase the intrinsic motivation of teachers, which according to Sagir Siswanto (2005), is one of the main motors in encouraging someone to contribute optimally. Furthermore, strong leadership can encourage the internal environment of teachers, namely aspects of professionalism such as integrity, responsibility, and commitment to duties. Teacher professionalism that is fostered through coaching and example from leaders will strengthen the implementation of teachers' competencies in real terms in learning. In line with the *transformational leadership* theory of Bass and Avolio (1994), leadership that generates inspiration and collective vision is able to change individual behavior towards higher performance. Principals who are able to become role models will encourage teachers to go beyond the boundaries of routine, making work a soul calling, not just an obligation. Thus, leadership is not only about the ability to manage, but also about creating a productive and humane work ecosystem. For this reason, improving the leadership competence of school principals needs to be an integral part of the strategy to improve the quality of education at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal.

### 3.5 The Influence of Work Motivation, Teacher Competence, School Culture and Leadership on Teacher Performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal

Based on the results of the F test, it is known that simultaneously the variables of work motivation (X1), teacher competence (X2), school culture (X3), and leadership (X4) have a significant effect on the performance of teachers (Y) at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal. This is shown by the  $F_{cal}$  value of 69.912 which is much larger than the  $F_{table}$  of 3.37, as well as a significance value of 0.000 which is smaller than 0.05. These findings confirm that although not all variables have a partially significant influence, the four variables together form a strong and complementary relationship in explaining teacher performance variations. This shows that there is a synergy between organizational and individual factors in creating a work environment that supports optimal teacher performance. This result is in accordance with the findings of Sutrisno (2021) who stated that a combination of factors such as motivation, work culture, and leadership has a significant simultaneous influence on teacher performance. Research by Hartini and Cahyono (2022) also strengthens that the simultaneous approach provides a more comprehensive picture of the dynamics of the relationship between variables in the context of educational institutions. Furthermore, based on the results of the determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) test, an  $R^2$  value of 0.918 or 91.8% was obtained. This means that 91.8% of the variation in teacher performance can be explained by the four independent variables studied, while the remaining 8.2% is influenced by other factors outside the model, such as teacher welfare, national education policies, family environment, and individual psychological conditions. This very high determination value shows that the regression model used in this study has excellent predictive capabilities and is relevant in the socio-educational context. This finding is in line with the opinion of Sugiyono (2017) who stated that an  $R^2$  value above 0.7 indicates that the regression model has strong explanatory power in social research. In addition, research by Nurhayati (2021) also supports that the combination of organizational and individual variables can explain more than 90% of teacher performance variations, proving that this approach is worthy of being used as a basis for strategic decision-making in the school environment. This study aimed to examine the effects of work motivation, teacher competence, school culture, and leadership on teacher performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal, both individually and simultaneously. The analysis was conducted using t-tests for partial effects and an F-test for simultaneous effects.

### 3.6 The Effect of Work Motivation on Teacher Performance

The t-test result for the work motivation variable showed a t-value of 1.036, which is less than the t-table value of 2.055, with a significance level of 0.310 ( $> 0.05$ ). This indicates that work motivation does not have a significant effect on teacher performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal. This finding is not consistent with the studies of Siswanto (2005) and Fauzi & Rachmawati (2020), who highlight motivation as a critical factor in encouraging teacher commitment and performance. However, the current result is supported by Fitriani (2019), who argues that motivation alone cannot improve performance unless supported by institutional mechanisms such as incentives, leadership, and adequate facilities. In this context, it is likely that although teachers may feel motivated, the absence of external support systems inhibits their ability

to perform at optimal levels.

### 3.7 The Effect of Teacher Competence on Teacher Performance

The analysis found that the t-value for teacher competence was -0.825, with a p-value of 0.417, indicating no significant effect on teacher performance. This result is in contrast with Law No. 14 of 2005, which mandates that teacher competence covering knowledge, skills, and professional values is foundational to educational quality. Likewise, the findings deviate from studies by Makmur (2023) and Putri & Sari (2021), which emphasize that competence is a key determinant of performance. Nevertheless, the finding aligns with Kamijan and Yuyun (2021), who suggest that competence requires institutional reinforcements such as structured supervision, continuous development, and professional collaboration in order to translate into actual work performance. Thus, competence alone is insufficient without enabling conditions in the school environment.

### 3.8 The Effect of School Culture on Teacher Performance

The variable of school culture had a t-value of 3.945, which is greater than 2.055, with a p-value of 0.001 ( $< 0.05$ ). This result indicates that school culture has a significant positive effect on teacher performance. This finding is consistent with theories proposed by Kamijan and Yuyun (2021) and Schein (2010), who emphasize that a supportive, value-driven organizational culture fosters commitment, collaboration, and accountability all of which contribute to improved teacher outcomes. It also aligns with Siswanto's (2005) motivation theory, which posits that a conducive environment strengthens intrinsic motivation. The presence of shared norms, mutual respect, and ethical standards in the school appears to create a climate that enhances teacher professionalism and engagement.

### 3.9 The Effect of Leadership on Teacher Performance

The leadership variable showed a t-value of 3.002, which is above the critical value of 2.055, and a p-value of 0.006 ( $< 0.05$ ), suggesting that leadership has a significant and positive effect on teacher performance. This outcome is in agreement with the transformational leadership theory of Bass and Avolio (1994), which argues that inspirational leadership stimulates intellectual and emotional commitment from followers. It is also supported by Siswanto (2005), who notes that good leadership can strengthen motivation and integrity among teachers. Principals who provide vision, recognition, and personal support contribute to the development of a healthy school climate, which in turn boosts performance.

### 3.10 The Simultaneous Effect of Work Motivation, Competence, School Culture, and Leadership on Teacher Performance

The F-test yielded an F-value of 69.912, which is greater than the F-table value of 3.37, with a significance value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). This indicates that the four independent variables jointly have a significant effect on teacher performance. Moreover, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was 0.918, meaning that 91.8% of the variation in teacher performance is explained by work motivation, teacher competence, school culture, and leadership, while the remaining 8.2% is likely influenced by other factors such as personal well-being, national education policy, and psychological conditions. These findings are supported by Sutrisno (2021) and Hartini & Cahyono (2022), who found that combined internal and external factors especially those related to institutional culture and leadership are more predictive of performance than individual variables alone. The high  $R^2$  value also aligns with Sugiyono (2017), who considers values above 0.7 to indicate strong explanatory power in social science models.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Teacher performance is a crucial pillar in ensuring the quality of education and student success. This study sought to analyze the effect of work motivation, teacher competence, school culture, and leadership on teacher performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal. The findings revealed that, partially, school culture and leadership had a significant positive effect on teacher performance, whereas work motivation and teacher competence did not show a significant individual

influence. However, when analyzed simultaneously, the four variables collectively had a very strong and significant effect, as shown by an F-value of 69.912 ( $p < 0.001$ ) and a high coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.918$ ). This indicates that 91.8% of the variation in teacher performance could be explained by the interaction of these four factors. These results support the argument that teacher performance is shaped not by a single dominant factor, but by the synergy of internal and external conditions within the school environment. Motivation and competence, although theoretically essential, require reinforcement through a supportive culture and effective leadership to manifest into actual performance. A strong school culture characterized by collaboration, respect, and shared values provides an enabling climate for teachers to work effectively. Likewise, transformational leadership from principals acts as a catalyst that aligns individual motivation and competence with institutional goals. Therefore, the study concludes that improving teacher performance at SMP Muhammadiyah 35 Sigambal and potentially in similar educational contexts—requires an integrated strategy that addresses both personal (internal) and institutional (external) dimensions. School stakeholders are encouraged to not only invest in professional development and capacity building but also cultivate a conducive organizational culture and strengthen leadership practices. These efforts must be interconnected to produce meaningful, sustainable improvements in teacher performance and, ultimately, student learning outcomes.

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